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THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

FOUR VOLUMES IN TWO.

VOL. III.

The time of life is short;
To spend that shortness basely, were too long,
If life did ride upon a dial's point,
Still ending at the arrival of an hour.

SHAKESPEARE.

BY MISS PORTER.

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THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

CHAPTER I.

When Thaddeus awoke next morning, he found himself more refreshed and freer from the effects of the last night's discovery, than he could have reasonably hoped. The labour and anxiety which the fire had compelled him to exert, having forced his thoughts into a different channel, afforded his nerves an opportunity to regain some portion of their usual strength. He could now ponder on what he had heard, without suffering the crimes of another to lay him on the rack. The reins were again restored to his hands; and only as much of his mind as he pleased, could now shew itself either in his face or manner.

Though the count's feelings were very sensible, and when suddenly attacked, it was not always that he could hide the pain he felt; yet he possessed a power of look that immediately repressed any curiosity that might have been impertinent. Indeed, this mantle of repulsion has often proved to be his best friend, for never had man more demands on the dignity of his soul to shine out about his person.

Not unfrequently, when Miss Dundas has been schooling her sister on the absurd civilities which she paid to her language-master; and half a dozen pretty beaux and belles have joined in the ridicule, the appearance of *the Count* has at once called a natural glow *through the ladies'* rouge, and silenced the gentlemen.

The morning after the fire, a little bevy of fashionable butterflies were collected in this way, in one corner of Miss Dundas's study, when, during a moment's pause, "I hope, Miss Beaufort," cried the Honourable Mr. Lascelles, a young man of a stamp that generally wears the impression of the last speaker, "I hope Miss Beaufort you don't intend to consume the brightness of your eyes over this stupid language?"

"What language, Mr. Lascelles?" inquired she, "I have only this moment entered the room, and I don't know what you are talking about."

"Good Lud, that is very true!" cried he, "I mean a shocking jargon, which a shocking pensersso man teaches to these ladies. We want to persuade Miss Euphemia that it spoils her mouth."

"You are always misconceiving me, Mr. Lascelles;" interrupted Miss Dundas impatiently, "I did not advance one word against the language; I merely remonstrated with Phemy against her stupid attentions to the man we hire to teach it." "That was what I meant, Madam," resumed he, with a low bow.

"You meant what, Sir?" demanded the little beauty contemptuously, "but I need not ask. You are like a bad mirror that from radical defect always gives false reflections."

"Very good, efaith, Miss Euphemia! I declare, sterling wit! It would do honour to Sheridan or your sister."

"Mr. Lascelles," cried Euphemia, more vexed than before, "let me tell you, such impertinence is very disgraceful in a gentleman."

"Upon my soul, Miss Euphemia!"

"Pray allow the petulant young lady to get out of her airs, (as she has, I believe, got out of her senses,) without our help;" exclaimed Miss Dundas, "for I declare to heaven, I know not where she picked up these vile democratic ideas."

"I am not a democrat, Diana," answered Euphemia, rising from her seat; "and I won't stay to be abused, when I know it is all envy, because Mr. Constantine happened to say that I had a quicker memory than you have."

She left the room as she ended. Miss Dundas, ready

to storm with passion, but striving to conceal it, burst into a violent laugh, and turning to Miss Beaufort; "You see, my dear," said she, "a sad specimen of Euphemia's temper; yet I hope you won't think too severely of her, for, poor thing! she has been spoilt by us all."

"Pray do not apologize to me in particular!" replied Miss Beaufort, rather coldly; "but as you have done so, I am induced to say, that I think it probable she would have shewn her temper less, had you given your admonition in private, though I cannot doubt of her having committed something wrong."

"Yes, something very wrong:" exclaimed Miss Dundas, reddening at a rebuke from a quarter whence she so little expected one; "both Mr. Lascelles, and lord Berrington there—"

"Don't bring in my name, I pray, Miss Dundas;" cried the viscount, who had been sitting in a recess looking over an old edition of Massinger's Plays; "You know I hate being squeezed into squabbles."

Miss Dundas dropped the corners of her mouth, in contempt, and went on.

"Well then, Mr. Lascelles and Miss Poyntz here, have both at different times been present when Phemy has conducted herself in a very ridiculous way towards a young man, whom lady Tinemouth made a great fuss about sending to teach us German. Can you believe it possible, that a girl of her fashion could behave in this style, without having first imbibed some very dangerous notions? I am sure I am right, for she treats him with three times the politeness she uses to the gentlemen who are now in the room." Miss Dundas, supposing that she had set the business in a light beyond controversy, stopped with an air of triumph. Miss Beaufort perceived that her answer was expected.

"I really cannot discover any thing in the affair so very reprehensible; observed she, "Perhaps this man you speak of may have talents and worth; he may be above his situation."

"Ah! above it, sure enough!" cried Lascelles, laughing boisterously at his own folly, "he is tall enough to be above every thing, even good manners, for notwithstanding his plebeian calling, I don't find that he knows how to keep his distance."

"I am sorry for that Lascelles," cried Berrington, measuring the puppy with his good-natured eye, "for these Magog men are terrible objects to us of meaner dimensions! '*A substitute shines brightly as a king until a king be by.*"

"Why, my lord, you do not mean to compare me with such a low fellow as this? I don't understand, lord Berrington—"

"Bless me, gentlemen!" cried Miss Dundas, frightened at the angry looks of the little Honourable, "Why, my lord, I thought you hated squabbles?"

"So I do, Miss Dundas;" replied he, laying down his book and coming forward, "and, upon my honour, Mr. Lascelles," added he, smiling, and turning towards the coxcomb, who stood nidging his head with anger, by Miss Beaufort's chair; "upon my honour, Mr. Lascelles, I did not mean to draw any parallel whatever between your person and talents, and those of this Mr.——I forget his name, for truly I never saw him in my life; but, I dare swear, that no comparison can exist between you."

Lascelles took the surface of this speech, and bowed; whilst his lordship turning to Miss Beaufort, began to compliment himself on possessing so fair an ally in defence of the absent person.

"I have never seen him;" replied she, "and what is more, I never heard of him, till on entering the room, Mr. Lascelles attacked me for my opinion. I only arrived from the country last night, therefore, I am quite at a loss to guess the real grounds of this ill-judged bustle of Miss Dundas about a man whom she styles despicable. If he be, why retain him in her service; And what is more absurd, why make a person, in that subordinate situation, the subject of debate amongst her friends?"

"You are right, Miss Beaufort," returned lord Berrington; "But the eloquent Miss Dundas is so kind to her friends, that she lets no opportunity slip of displaying her power, both over the republic of words and the empire of her mother's family."

"Are you not severe now lord Berrington? I thought you merciful to the poor tutor."

"*No: I hope* I am faithful on both subjects. I know *her; and it is true,* that I have seen nothing of the t

tor; but it is natural to wield the sword in favour of the defenceless, and I always regard the absent in that light."

Whilst these two conversed at one end of the room, the other group were arraigning the presumption of the vulgar, and the folly of those who gave it encouragement.

At a fresh burst of laughter from Miss Dundas, Miss Beaufort turned her head as we mechanically do on hearing an unexpected noise; her eye was arrested by the appearance of a gentleman in black, who was standing a few paces within the door. He was regarding the party before him, with that lofty tranquillity which is inseperable from high rank when accompanied by virtue. His figure, his face, and his air, contained that pure simplicity of contour, which at the same time pourtrays all the graces of youth, with the dignity of manhood.

Miss Beaufort in a moment perceived that he was unobserved; and rising from her seat, "Miss Dundas," said she, "here is a gentleman."

Miss Dundas looked round carelessly.

"You may sit down, Mr. Constantine."

"Gracious Heaven!" thought Miss Beaufort, as he approached, and the ingenuous expression of his fine countenance was directed towards her. "Can this noble creature have been the subject of such impertinence?"

"I commend little Phemy's taste;" whispered lord Berrington, leaving his seat; "ha! Miss Beaufort, a young Apollo?"

"And not in disguise," replied she in the same manner, just as Thaddeus had bowed to her; and, with '*veiled lids*' was taking up a book from the table, not to read, but literally to have an object to look on, that could not insult him.

"What did Miss Dundas say was his name?" whispered the viscount.

"Constantine, I think."

"Mr. Constantine," said the benevolent Berrington, "will you accept of this chair?"

Thaddeus declined it. But the viscount read in the '*proud humility*' of his bow, that he had not always waited like a dependant on the nods of insolent men and women of fashion; and with a good humoured compulsion he added, "Pray oblige me, for by that means I

shall have an excuse to squeeze into the *Sultane* that if so '*happy as to bear the weight of Beaufort!*"

Though Miss Beaufort had only seen his lordship, once before (and that hardly for ten minutes, with her cousin in Leicestershire) she smiled at this unexpected freedom, and in consideration of the motive, made room for him on the sofa.

Insult was not swifter than kindness, in its passage to the heart of Thaddeus; who, whilst he received the viscount's chair, raised his face towards him with a look beaming such graciousness and obligation, that Miss Beaufort turned with renewed contempt on the party which were leaving the study.

The instant Miss Dundas closed the door after her, lord Berrington exclaimed, "Upon my honour, Mr. Constantine, I have a good mind to put that terrible pupil of yours into my next Comedy! Don't you think she would beat Katharine and Petrucio all to nothing? I declare I will have her."

"In *propria persona*, I hope?" asked Miss Beaufort, with more bitterness than she was accustomed to conceive, much less approve, by giving it expression.

The count remained silent during these remarks, though he fully appreciated the first civil treatment which had greeted him since his admission within the doors of lady Dundas. Miss Euphemia's attentions had any other source than benevolence.

Miss Beaufort wished to relieve his embarrassment by addressing him; but the more she thought, the less she knew what to say; and she had just abandoned it as a vain attempt, when Euphemia entered the room alone. She curtsied to Thaddeus, and took her place at the table. Lord Berrington rose.

"I must say good bye, Miss Euphemia; I will not disturb your studies. Farewell Miss Beaufort," added he, addressing her, and bending his lips to her hand, "adieu! I shall look in upon you to-morrow. Good morning Mr. Constantine."

Thaddeus bowed to him, and the viscount disappeared.

"I am surprised, Miss Beaufort," observed Euphemia pettishly, her temper not having subsided since her sister's lecture, "how you can endure that coxcomb!"

"*Pardon me*, Euphemia," replied she, "though I did not exactly expect the ceremony his lordship uses in

taking leave yet I think there is a generosity in his sentiments which deserves a better title."

"I know nothing about his sentiments, for I always run away from his conversation. A better title! I declare you make me laugh. Did you ever see such fantastical dressing? I vow to heaven, I never meet him without thinking of Jemmy Jessamy, and the rest of the gossomer beaux that squired our grandmothers!"

"My acquaintance with lord Berrington is trifling;" returned Miss Beaufort, withdrawing her eyes from the pensive features of the Count, who was sorting the lessons: "Yet I am so far prepossessed in his favour, that I see little in his appearance to reprehend. However, I will not contest that point, as perhaps, the philanthropy I this morning discovered in his heart, the honest warmth with which he defended a traduced character, after you left the room, might render his person as charming in my eyes, as I certainly found his mind."

Thaddeus had not for a long time heard such sentiments out of lady Tinemouth's circle, and he now looked up to take a distinct view of the speaker.

In consequence of the established mode, that the presiding lady of the house is to give the tone to her guests, many were the lords and ladies who sat with the count in Miss Dundas's library, whose faces he was as ignorant of when they went out as when they came in. They took little notice of him; and he, regarding them much less, pursued his occupation without evincing a greater consciousness of their presence, than what mere ceremony demanded.

Accordingly, this morning, when, in compliance with lord Berrington's politeness, he receiving his chair, and saw him remove to a sofa beside a very beautiful woman, he supposed that she resembled the rest of Miss Dundas's friends, and never directed his eyes a second time to her figure. But when he heard her, (in a voice that was melody itself) defend his lordship's character, on principles which bore the most honourable testimony to her own, his eyes rivetted themselves on her face.

Though a long muslin wrapper involved her fine person, a modest grace was observable in every limb. Her snowy arm, clasped with a loose pearl bracelet, was extended towards Euphemia, in the energy of her defence; her

beautiful eyes shone with benevolence, and her rosy lips seemed to breathe balm whilst she spoke.

Thaddeus did not withdraw his fixed eyes till they encountered those of Miss Beaufort, which immediately retreated, with a deep blush covering her face and neck. She had never met such a look before, except from the dark and penetrating glances of her cousin, who had long elected himself the guardian of her heart.

Miss Beaufort was the orphan heiress of Admiral Beaufort, an only brother of the late lady Somerset. Her parents dying at an early age, bequeathed her to the care of lady Somerset, her paternal aunt, and nominated Sir Robert Somerset, her ladyship's husband, to be her sole guardian. When lady Somerset died, which happened three days before her son's arrival from the Continent, a double portion of Sir Robert's love fell upon this niece. In her society alone, he found comfort; and, relinquishing the splendid scenes of London, he retired into the country; living sometimes at one seat, and sometimes at another, in hopes, by change of place; to dissipate some of the grief that rankled at his heart.

Sir Robert Somerset, from the time that his marriage took place with Miss Beaufort, to the hour in which he followed her to the grave, had attracted esteem and affection from people of every rank. The fascination of his manners, united with the inflexible probity of his character, both as a man and as a senator, drew after him the confidence of all men. The good, and even the bad, looked on him as a pillar of strength, whenever reliance was to be allied with virtue. For instance, the excellent lord Arun bequeathed his only child to his protection; and the sordid, and peculent Sir Hector Dundas, when he descended to *Hades*, nominated Sir Robert Somerset principal trustee over the immense fortunes of his wife and daughters.

This latter circumstance explains the intimacy between two families, the female parts of which might otherwise have never met.

On Sir Robert's last visit to London, lady Dundas became so urgent in requesting Miss Beaufort might spend the ensuing season with her in town, that he could *not*, without absolute madness, refuse. In compliance *with this arrangement*, Miss Beaufort, accompanied by *Miss Dorothy* Somerset, a maiden sister of the Baronet,

quitted Deerhurst, and settled themselves in Harley-street for the remainder of the winter; at least, the winter of fashion; which, by a strange effect of her magic figure, in defiance of grassy meadows, leafy trees, and sweet-scented flowers, extends its nominal sceptre over the vernal months of April, May; and even the rich pleasures of "*resplendant June.*"

The summer part of this winter, Miss Beaufort reluctantly consented should be sacrificed to ceremony, in the the dust and heat of a great city; and if the melancholy which encreased upon Sir Robert every day since the death of his wife, had not rendered her averse to oppose his wishes, she certainly would have made objections to the visit.

During their journey, she could not refrain from drawing a comparison between the insipid routine of lady Dundas's way of life, and the rational, as well as splendid arrangement of her late aunt.

Lady Somerset's monthly assemblies were not only the most elegant and brilliant parties about town, but her weekly *conversations* surpassed every thing of the kind in the kingdom. On these nights, her ladyship's rooms used to be filled with the most eminent characters which England could afford. There, the young Mary Beaufort, whose ardent disposition, impelled with a comet's velocity to the feet of Genius, listened to pious divines of every Christian persuasion: there, she gathered wisdom from real philosophers: and, in the society of our best living poets, cherished an enthusiasm for all that is great and good. Sir Robert Somerset's house, on these evenings, reminded the visitor of what he had read or imagined of the school of Athens. He beheld not only sages, soldiers, statesmen, and poets, but intelligent, and amiable women, amongst whom, the beautiful Mary, imbibed that steady reverence of virtue and talent, which no intermixture with the common *ephemera* of the day, could either disgrace or alloy.

Notwithstanding this freedom from the chains with which her fashionable advisers would have shackled her mind. Miss Beaufort possessed too much judgment and delicacy to flash her liberty in their eyes. Enjoying her independence with meekness, she held it more secure. *Mary was no declaimer*; not even in defence of oppressed goodness, or injured genius. Aware that direct op-

position often incenses malice, she directed the shaft from its aim, if it were in her power; and when the attempt failed, strove, by respect or compassion, to heal what she could not prevent. Thus whatever she said or did, bore the stamp of her soul, whose leading attribute was modesty. By having learnt much, and thought more, she proved, in her conduct, that reflection is the alchemy which turns knowledge into wisdom.

Miss Beaufort had never found herself incapable of attempting something towards her benevolent intention, till she witnessed the count Sobieski, standing under an over-bearing insolence, which his dignified composure rebounded upon his insulters. The situation was new to her; and when she dropped her confused eyes beneath his unexpected gaze, she marvelled within herself at the ease with which she had taken up the cause of lord Berrington, and the difficulty she felt to summon one word as a repellant to the unmerited attack on the men before her.

Euphemia cared nothing about Sir Harry; to her his faults or his virtues were alike indifferent: and forgetting that civility demanded some reply to Miss Beaufort's last observation; or rather taking advantage of the tolerated privilege usurped by many high-bred people, that they may be ill-bred, when and how they please; she turned to Thaddeus, and said, with a forced smile.

"Mr. Constantine, I don't like your opinion upon the ode I shewed to you; I think it a very absurd opinion: or perhaps you did not conceive me rightly?"

Miss Beaufort took up a book, that her unoccupied attention might not disturb their studies.

Euphemia resumed, with a more natural dimple, and touching his glove with the rosy points of her fingers.

"You are stupid at translation."

Thaddeus coloured and sat uneasily; he knew not how to evade this direct, though covered attack.

"I am a bad poet, Madam. Indeed it would be dangerous for a good one, to attempt the same path with Sappho and Addison."

Euphemia now blushed as deep as the Count, but from another motive; and opening her grammar, whispered, "*you are either* a very dull, or a very modest *man!*" *and sighing* began to repeat her lesson.

Whilst he bent his head over the sheet that he was correcting, she suddenly exclaimed, "Bless me, Mr. Constantine, what have you been doing? I hope you don't read in bed! The top of your hair is burnt to a cinder! Why, you look much more like having been in a fire, than Miss Beaufort does."

Thaddeus put his hand up to his head.

"I did not know that I had carried away any more marks of a fire in which I really was last night, than scorched clothes and hands."

"A fire," interrupted Miss Beaufort, closing her book, "was it not near Tottenham-court-road?"

"It was, Madam," answered he in a tone almost as surprised as her own.

"Good gracious!" cried Euphemia, exerting her little voice, that she might be heard before Miss Beaufort should have time to reply, "then I vow, you are the gentleman that Miss Beaufort said, ran into the burning house, and, covered with flames, saved two children from perishing!"

"Am I so happy as to meet the lady," replied he, turning with an animated air to Miss Beaufort; in you, Madam, who so humanely assisted the poor sufferers, and received the child from my arms?"

"It was, indeed, myself, Mr. Constantine," returned she, a tear swimming over her eye, which in a moment gave the cue to the tender Euphemia. She drew out her handkerchief; and, whilst her pretty cheeks overflowed, and her sweet voice was rendered sweeter by an emotion raised by ten thousand delightful fancies, she took hold of Miss Beaufort's hand.

"O! my lovely friend, wonder not that I esteem this brave Constantine far beyond his present station!"

Thaddeus drew back, Miss Beaufort looked amazed; but Euphemia had mounted her romantic Pegasus, and the scene was too sentimental to close.

"Come here, Mr. Constantine," cried she, extending her other hand to him. Wondering where this folly would terminate, he gave it to her; when, instantly joining it with that of Miss Beaufort, she pressed them close together, and said, "Sweet Mary! Heroic Constantine! I *thus* elect you the two dearest friends of my *heart*. *So charmingly* associated in the delightful task

of compassion, you shall ever be co-mingled in my feeling bosom !"

Then putting her handkerchief to her eyes, she walked out of the room, leaving Miss Beaufort and the Count, confused and confounded, by the side of each other, Miss Beaufort suspecting that some extravagant passion subsisted between Euphemia and her young tutor, declined speaking first. Thaddeus fixing his gaze on her downcast and revolving countenance, perceived nothing like offended pride at his undesigned presumption. He saw that she was only embarrassed; and, after a minute's hesitation, said,—

"I hope that Miss Beaufort is sufficiently acquainted with the romance of Miss Euphemia's character, to pardon the action, unintentional on my part, of having touched her hand? I declare I had no expectation of Miss Euphemia's design."

"Do not make any apology to me, Mr. Constantine," returned she, resuming her seat, whence she had risen on the abrupt departure of Euphemia; "To be sure, I was a little electrified by the stage situation in which the vivid feelings of Miss Euphemia have just made us actors. But I shall not forego my claim on a share of what she promised—your acquaintance?"

Thaddeus expressed how highly he felt the honour of her condescension.

"I am not fond of fine terms," continued she, smiling? "but I know, time and merit must purchase esteem. I can engage for the first, as I am to remain in town at least three months; but for the last, I fear I shall never have the opportunity of giving such an earnest of my deserving, as you did last night of yours."

Footsteps sounded on the stairs. Thaddeus took up his hat, and bowing, replied to her compliment with such a modest yet noble grace, that she gazed after him with wonder and concern. Before he closed the door he again bowed. Pleased with the transient look of pleasure which at parting beamed from his eyes, through whose ingenuous mirrors, she believed every thought of his soul might be read, she smiled a second adieu; and as he disappeared, left the room by another passage.

CHAPTER II.

When the Count appeared the succeeding day in Harley-street, Miss Beaufort introduced him to Miss Dorothy Somerset, as the gentleman who had so gallantly preserved the lives of the children at the hazard of his own.

Notwithstanding the lofty tossings of Miss Dundas's head, the good old maid paid him several encomiums on such intrepidity; and telling him that the sufferers were the wife and family of a poor tradesman, who was gone into the country, she added, "But we saw them comfortably lodged before we left them; and, all the time we staid, I could not help congratulating myself on the easy compliance of Mary with my whims. I hate to sleep at an inn; and to prevent it then, I had prevailed on Miss Beaufort to pursue our road to town even through the night. It was lucky it happened so, for I am certain that Mary will not allow these poor creatures a long lament over the wreck of their little property."

"How charmingly, charitable, my lovely friend!" cried Euphemia, "let us make a collection for this unfortunate woman and her babes. Pray, as a small tribute, take that from me!" she put five guineas into the hand of the blushing Mary.

The ineffable grace with which the confused Miss Beaufort laid the money on her aunt's knee, did not escape the observation of Thaddeus, neither did the words with which it was accompanied.

"There, my dear Madam," said she, "I am only the agent of your wishes; and I beg you will take charge of Miss Euphemia's gift, until we see the poor woman."

When Lady Tinemouth was informed by Thaddeus of the addition to the Harley-street party, her ladyship declared her pleasure at the news, saying that she had been well acquainted with both Miss Dorothy and her niece, for some time before lady Somerset's death.

As the Countess paused, Thaddeus was on the point of expressing his concern that Pembroke had also lost his highly prized mother; but recollecting that lady Tinemouth was ignorant of their knowing each other, he allowed her to proceed without a remark.

"I have never been in company with her ladyship's son," continued the Countess; "it was during his absence on the Continent that I was introduced to lady Somerset. She was a woman who possessed the rare talent of conforming herself to all descriptions of people, and whilst the complacency of her attentions surpassed the most refined flattery, she commanded the highest veneration for herself. Hence you may credit my satisfaction in this acquaintance, which it is probable would never have taken place, had I been the happy countess of Tinemouth, instead of a deserted wife. Notwithstanding the family of the Somersets were related to my lord, they had treated him with coldness: and now doubly disgusted at his late flagrant behaviour, they commenced a friendship with me, I believe to demonstrate more fully their detestation of him. Indeed my husband is a creature of inconsistency. No man possessed more power to attract friends, than lord Tinemouth; and no man possessed less power to retain them: as fast as he made one, he offended the other; and through these means, has at this time deprived himself of every individual out of his own house, who might have esteemed his life of greater utility than his death."

"But lady Somerset," cried Thaddeus, impatient to change a subject, every word of which went like a dagger to his heart, "I mean, Miss. Dorothy Somerset, Miss Beaufort—."

"Yes," returned her ladyship; "I see, kind Mr. Constantine, your friendly solicitude to disengage me from retrospections so painful! Well then, I knew, and very much esteemed the two ladies you mention; but the death of lady Somerset, and their consequent residing in the country has prevented a renewal of this pleasure. However, as they have again visited town I will thank you to acquaint them with my intention to call on them in Harley-street. I remember thinking Miss Beaufort a very charming girl."

Thaddeus thought so too: he saw that she was beautiful, and he had witnessed instances of her goodness; the recollection of which, filled his mind with a complacency, that was quickly disturbed by the entrance of Miss Egerton, and lady Sara Roos.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Constantine;" cried the

lively Maria, shaking hands with him, "you are the very man whom I have been plotting against."

Lady Tinemouth felt uneasy at the care with which lady Sara averted her face; well knowing that it was to conceal that powerful agitation of her features, which always took place at the sight of Thaddeus.

"Well, what is your plot, Miss Egerton?" inquired he, "I shall consider myself honoured by your commands, and do not require a conspiracy to trap my obedience."

"That's a good boy! Then I have only to apply to you lady Tinemouth. Your ladyship must know," cried she, "that as lady Sara and I were a moment ago driving up the Hay-market, I nodded to Mr. Coleman who was coming out of the Play-house. When he stopped, I pulled the check string, and we had a great deal of con-fab out of the window. He tells me that a new farce is to come out this day week, and he should hope I would be there! No, says I, I cannot, for I am on a visit with that precise woman the countess of Tinemouth, who would not, to save you and all your generation, come into such a mob. Her ladyship shall have my box, cried he, for I would not for the world lose the honour of your opinion on the merits of my farce. To be sure not! cries I, so I accepted his box, and drove off, plotting with Lady Sara how to get your ladyship as a chaprone, and Mr. Constantine for our beau. He, has promised; so, dear lady Tinemouth, don't be inflexible!"

Thaddeus was confounded at the dilemma into which his ready acquiescence had involved his prudence. The countess shook her head.

"Now I declare, lady Tinemouth," exclaimed Miss Egerton, "this is an absolute stingy fit! You are afraid of your purse! You know this private box precludes all awkward meetings, and you can have no excuse."

"But it cannot preclude all awkward sights;" answered her ladyship, "You know, Maria, I never go into public for fear I should be shocked by the angry looks of my lord or son"

"Plague on them both, "cried Miss Egerton pettishly, "I wish the Lord would take your lord and son out of the *world altogether!*"

"*Maria!*" *retorted* her ladyship, with a grave air. "*Rebuke me,* lady Tinemouth, if you like; I con-

fets I am no Serena, and, these trials of temper d
agree with my constitution. There," cried she, thr
ing a silver medal on the table, and laughing in spit
herself, "there is our free entrance; but I will sen
back, and so break poor Coleman's heart."

"Fie, Maria;" answered her ladyship, patting
half angry cheek, "would you owe to your petula
what was denied to your good humour?"

"Then your ladyship will go!" exclaimed she ex
ingly, "You have yielded to my good humour; th
sullens were a part of my stratagem. I won't let
recede."

The idea struck lady Tinemouth, that this would
a proper opportunity to shew one of the Theatres to
young friend, without involving him in expense or c
gation, and accordingly she ratified her consent.

"Do you intend to favour us with your comp
lady Sara?" asked the Countess, with a hope that
would refuse.

Lady Sara, who had been standing during the deb
silently at the window, rather proudly answered.

"Yes, Madam, if you will honour me with your
tection."

Lady Tinemouth was the only one present who
derstood the offended feeling which these words con
ed; and, almost believing that she had insulted her,
implying suspicion, she approached her ladyship wi
pleading anxiety of countenance; "Then lady S
perhaps you will dine with me?" said she, "I mea
call on Mrs. Dorothy Somerset, and invite her to b
the party."

Lady Sara curtsied her acceptance of the invitat
and smiling, appeared to think no more of the ma
But, she neither forgot it, nor found herself able to
give lady Tinemouth, for betraying her into a c
dence, which her own turbulent passions made too
of access. She had listened unwillingly to the reas
ble declaration of the Countess, that her only way t
treat from an error which threatened criminality,
to avoid the object

"When a married woman," observed her ladys
"is so unhappy as to love another man than her husb
her only safety rests in the resolution to quit his soc
and to banish his image whenever it obtrudes."

Lady Sara, believing herself incapable of this er

hated the woman who thought it expedient. Lady Tinemouth, by letter and conversation, tried to display in every possible light, the enormity of giving encouragement to such an attachment; and ended with urging the consideration of her duty to heaven.

Of this argument, lady Sara knew little. She had never reflected on the nature of her Creator, though she sometimes went to church, repeated the prayers without feeling their spirit; and, when the coughing, sneezing, and blowing of noses, which commonly accompany the text, had subsided, she generally called up the remembrance of the last ball, or an anticipation of the next assembly, to amuse her till the prosing business was over. From church she drove to the park, where bowling round the ring, or sauntering in the gardens, she soon forgot that there existed in the universe a Power of higher consequence to please, than her own vanity, and the admiration of the spectators.

Lady Sara would have shuddered at hearing any one declare himself a deist, much more an atheist; but for any influence that her nominal belief had over her desires she might as well have been either. She never committed an action deserving the name of premeditated injury; nor went far out of her way to do her best friend a service; not because she wanted inclination, but she ceased to remember both the petitioner and his petition before he had been five minutes from her sight. She had read as much as most fine ladies have read; she had perused a few histories, a few volumes of essays, a few novels, and now and then a little poetry; these, and morning calls, with evening assemblies, filled up the day. This had been the routine of her life, till she met the count Sobieski at lady Tinemouth's, which event caused a total revolution in her mind and conduct.

The strength of lady Sara's understanding might have credited a better education; but her passions bearing an equal power with this vigour, and having taken a wrong direction, she neither felt the will nor the capability to hold the empire of her reason. When Love entered her heart, his first conquest was her vanity; she surrendered all her admirers in the hope of securing the admiration of Thaddeus; his second victory, made him *master of her discretion*; she revealed her unhappy *affection to lady* Tinemouth, and more than hinted it to *himself. What* had she else to lose? she believed her

honour to be safer than her life. *Her honour* was the term. She had no conception, or at best a faint one, that a breach of the marriage vow could be an outrage on the laws of heaven. The word *Sin*, has been gradually banished the oligarchy of fashion, from the hour in which Charles II. and his profligate court, trod down piety along with hypocrisy, to this day, when the new philosophy has accomplished its total outlawry, and denounced it a rebel to decency, and the freedom of man.

Thus, religion being driven from the haunts of the great, pagan morality is raised from that prostration, where, Dagon-like, it fell at the feet of the Scriptures, and is again erected as the idol of adoration. Guilt against heaven fades before the decrees of man; his law of ethics reprobates *crime;* but crime is only a temporary transgression in opposition to the general good; it draws no consequent punishment heavier than the anger of the offended parties. Morality neither promises rewards after death, nor chastisement for error. The disciples of this independent doctrine, hold forth instances of the perfectibility of human actions, produced from the unassisted decisions of human intellect on the limits of right and wrong. They admire virtue, because it is beautiful. They practise it, because it is heroic. They do not abstain from the gratification of an intemperate wish, under a belief that it is sinful, but in obedience to their reason which rejects the commission of a vicious act, because it is uncomely. In the first case, God is their judge; in the latter, themselves. The comparison need only be proposed to humble the pride that made it necessary. How do these systemisers refine and subtilize? How do they dwell on the principle of virtue, and turn it in every metaphysical light, till their philosophy rarifies it to nothing! Thus, some degrade, and others abandon the only basis on which an upright character can stand with firmness. The bulwark which Revelation has erected between the passions and the soul, is levelled first; and then that instinctive rule of right which the modern casuist nominates the citadel of virtue, falls of course.

By such gradations is the progress of depravity accomplished; and on such premises, did lady Sara (though she might not arrange them so distinctly) the general leaven having worked to her mind, deduce, that what she called preserving her honour was a mere establish-

ment of man, and might be extended or limited by him, to any length he liked. For instance, the Turks were not content with one wife, but appropriated hundreds to their possession; and, because such an enlargement was permitted by Mahammed, no other nation presumed to call them culpable.

Hence she thought, if she could once reconcile herself to believe, that her own happiness was dearer to her than the notice of half a thousand people to whom she was indifferent; that only in their opinion and the world's, her flying to the protection of Thaddeus would be a crime; could she confidently think this, what should deter her from instantly throwing herself into the arms of the man she loved?

"Ah?" cried she one night as she traversed her chamber in a paroxysm of tears, "what are the vows I have sworn? How can I keep them? I have sworn to love, to honour captain Roos; but, in spite of myself, without any action of my own, I have broken both these oaths. I cannot love him; I hate him, and I cannot honour the man I hate. What have I else to break? Nothing. My nuptial vow is as completely annihilated, as if I had left him never to return.—How?" cried she, after a pause of some minutes, "how shall I know what passes in the mind of Constantine? Did he love me, would he protect me, I would brave the whole universe; oh, I should be the happiest of the happy!"

Fatal conclusion of reflection! It infected her dreaming and her waking fancy. She regarded every thing as an enemy that opposed her passion; and as the first of these enemies, she detested lady Tinemouth. The Countess's last admonishing letter had enraged her by its arguments, and throwing it into the fire with execrations and tears, she determined to pursue her own will, but to affect being influenced by her ladyship's counsels.

The count Sobieski, who had never surmised the hundredth part of the love which lady Sara bore towards him, began to hope that her ardent manner had misled him; or that she had seen through the danger of such imprudence.

Under these impressions, the party for the theatre was settled; and Thaddeus, after sitting an hour in Grosvenor Place, returned to his humble home, and attendance on his friend.

CHAPTER III.

The addition of Miss. Dorothy Somerset and Miss Beaufort, to the morning group at Lady Dundas's, imparted a less reluctant motion to the before tardy feet of the Count, whenever he turned them towards Harley-street.

Miss Dorothy readily supposed him to have been better born than he appeared; and displeased with the treatment he received from Miss Dundas and her guests, behaved to him herself with the most gratifying politeness.

Aunt Dorothy (for that was the title by which every branch of the baronet's family addressed her;) was full twenty years the senior of her brother Sir Robert Somerset. Having in her youth been thought very like the famous and lovely Mrs. Woffington, she was considered the beauty of her time; and, as such, for ten years continued the reigning toast. Nevertheless, she arrived at the age of sixty-five, without having been either the object or the subject of a fervent passion.

Possessing a fine understanding, a fine taste, and fine feelings, she had some way escaped love It cannot be denied, that she was much admired, much respected, and much esteemed; and that she received two or three splendid proposals from men, whom she had animated thus far. Some of these men she admired, some she respected, and some she esteemed, but not one did she love, and she refused them all. Shortly after their discharge, they generally consoled themselves by marrying other women, who perhaps neither possessed the charms nor sense of Miss Somerset, yet she congratulated them on their choice, and frequently became the friend of both wife and husband.

Thus, year passed over year; Miss Somerset continued the esteemed of every worthy heart, though she could not find the embers of a warmer glow in any one of them; and, at the age of sixty-five, she found herself an old maid; but possessing as much good humour and affection towards the young people about her, as if she had owned half a dozen of her own offspring to mingle in the circle.

This amiable old lady, usually took her netting into the library beside the fair students, and, whenever Thaddeus entered the room (so natural is it for generous natures to sympathize) his eyes first sought her venerable figure, then glancing round, to catch an assuring beam from the sunny orbs of the lovely Mary, seated himself, with confidence.

The presence of these ladies, operated as a more than sufficient antidote to the disagreeables of his situation, To them he directed all the attention that was not required by his occupation; he heard only them speak, when a hundred others were talking; he saw only them, when a hundred others were in company.

In addition to this pleasant change, Miss Euphemia's passion assumed a form less capable of tormenting. She had been reading Madame d'Arblay's Camilla, and becoming so enamoured of the delicacy and pensive sim ce of the interesting heroine, she immediately determined on adopting the same character; and at the same time, taking it into her ever creative brain, that Constantine's coldness bore a strict affinity to the cautious Edgar Thaddlebert; without further debate she wiped the rouge off her face and prepared to '*let concealment like a worm in the bud, feed on her damask cheek.*'

To afford decorous support to this fancy, her gayest clothes were thrown aside, to make way for a negligence of apparel, that cost her two hours each morning to compose. Her dimpling smiles were now quite vanished. She was ever sighing, and ever silent, and ever lolling and leaning about, or reclining along the sofa in some pretty disconsolate attitude, just selected from a folio of prints, in which she daily studied her dress and movements.

Thaddeus preferred this pathetic whim to her former lover-like advances; it afforded him quiet, and relieved him from much embarrassment.

Every succeeding visit induced Miss Beaufort to observe him with nicer accuracy, and a more lively interest The nobleness, yet humility, with which he behaved towards herself and her aunt: and the manly serenity with which he suffered the insulting sarcasms of Miss Dundas, led her not merely to conceive, but to *entertain* many doubts that his present situation was far *below his birth.*

The ladies, who dropped in now and then on the sisters, were not backward in espousing this game; as it played away a few minutes, to join in a laugh with the *witty Diana* These gracious beings, from their sex, knew they were privileged to offend; but it was not always that the gentlemen durst venture beyond a shrug of the shoulder, a drop of the lip, a wink of the eye, or a raising of the brows. However, Mary observed with contempt, that they were wise enough to exercise these specimens of hostility only when the Count had turned his back; and regarding him with encreased admiration, she first felt indignation, and then perfect disdain, at the motives of envy which actuated these men to insult him under the mask of indifference.

The occasional calls of lady Tinemouth and Miss Egerton, stimulated the cabal against poor Thaddeus. The sincere sentiment of equality with themselves, which these two ladies evinced by their behaviour to him; and the same conduct being adopted by Mrs. Dorothy and her beautiful niece; besides the evident partiality of Euphemia; altogether inflamed the spleen of Miss Dundas's *coeterie* to absolute rudeness.

This little phalanx, at the head of which was the superb Diana, could offer no real reason for disliking a man, not only beneath them, but who had never offended them even by implication. It was a sufficient apology to their easy consciences, that "he gave himself such courtly airs as were quite ridiculous; that his presumption was astonishing. In short, they were all idle, and it was monstrous amusing to lounge a morning with the rich Dundasses, and hoax monsieur."

Had Thaddeus known one fourth of the insolent derision with which his misfortunes were treated behind his back; though he considered the very breath he breathed, ought to be sacrificed if conducive to the life of his friend, perhaps even his necessity, could not in this case have detained him in his employment. The brightness of a brave man's name, makes shadows perceptible, which might pass unmarked over a duller surface. Sobieski's nice honour would have supposed itself sullied by enduring such contumely with toleration. But as was said before, the male adjuncts of Miss Dundas, *had received such* a prompt warning from an accidental *knitting of the* Count's brow, that they never after, *could muster* temerity to sport their wit to his face.

These circumstances were not lost upon Mary; she collected them as part of a treasure, and turned them over on her pillow with the jealous examination of a miser. Like Euphemia, she supposed Thaddeus to be other than he seemed, yet her fancy did not gift him with the blood of the Bourbons; she merely believed him to be a gentleman; and, from the maternal manner of lady Tinemouth towards him, suspected that her ladyship knew more of his history than she chose to reveal.

Things were in this state, when the Countess requested that Miss Dorothy would trust her niece the ensuing evening, with herself and a little party to the Haymarket Theatre. The good lady having consented, Miss Beaufort received the permission with pleasure; and, as she was invited to sup with her ladyship, she formed the hope that something might fall from the Countess or Miss Egerton, which would throw a light on the true situation of Mr Constantine.

From infancy, Miss Beaufort had loved with enthusiasm all kinds of excellence. Indeed she esteemed no person warmly, whom she did not think eminent in the liberal qualities over the rest of mankind. She sought for something to respect in every character; and when by chance she found any thing to admire, her susceptible soul blazed, and, by its own pure flame, lit her to a clearer examination of the object for whom she felt interested.

When lady Somerset collected all the virtue and talent in the country around her table, they were not brought there on a vain errand. From them, Miss Beaufort gathered her best lessons in morality and taste; and from them, her earliest perceptions of friendship. Mary, was the beloved pupil, and respected friend, of the brightest characters in England; and though they were men, some of whom had not passed the age of forty, she had never been in love, nor had mistaken the nature of her feelings so far, as to call them by that name. Hence she neither felt afraid nor ashamed, to acknowledge a correspondence which she knew to be her best distinction. But, had the frank and innocent Mary, exhibited half the like attentions which she paid to these men in one hour when they were present, to the common class of young men through the course of a month, they

would have declared, "that the poor girl was overhead in love with them; and have pitied (what they justly denominate) her folly." Foolish must that woman be, who will sacrifice the most precious gift in her possession, to the superficial graces, or empty blandishments of a self-idolized coxcomb.

Such a being, was not Mary Beaufort; and, on these principles, she contemplated the extraordinary merits of the exiled Thaddeus, with an interest honourable to her penetration and heart.

When Miss Egerton called in Lady Sara Roos's carriage to take her to the Hay-market, Mary was not displeased at seeing Mr. Constantine step out of the coach to hand her in. During their drive, Miss Egerton informed her, that from lady Tinemouth's sudden indisposition, lady Sara had kindly undertaken to be their chaprone; and promised to bring them all back to sup in Grosvenor-place.

Lady Sara had never seen Mary, though she had frequently heard of her beauty and vast fortune; this last qualification, her ladyship hoped, might have given an unmerited *eclat* to the first; therefore, when she saw in the person of Miss Beaufort, the most beautiful creature she had ever beheld, nothing could equal her surprise and vexation.

The happy lustre that beamed in the fine eyes of Mary, shone like a vivifying influence around her; a bright glow animated her cheek, whilst a pleasure for which she did not seek to account, bound at her heart, and modulated every tone of her voice, to sweetness and enchantment.

"Syren!" thought lady Sara, withdrawing her large dark eyes from her face, and turning them full of dissolving languor on Thaddeus, "here are all thy charms directed?" then drawing a sigh so deep, that it made her neighbour start, she fixed her eyes on her fan, and never looked up till they reached the play-house.

The curtain was raised as the little party seated themselves in the box.

"Can any body tell me what the play is?" asked lady Sara.

"*I never* thought of inquiring," replied Maria.

"*I looked in* the paper this morning," said Miss Beaufort, "and I think it is called Sighs, a translation from a Drama of Kotzebue."

"A strange title!" was the general observation, when Mr. Suett, who personated one of the characters, beginning to speak, their attention was summoned to the stage.

On the entrance of Mr. Charles Kemble in the character of Adelbert the Count unconsciously turned pale. He perceived by the dress of the actor, that he intended to personate a Pole; and, alarmed at the probability of seeing something to recal recollections which he strove to banish, his agitation did not allow him to hear any thing that passed.

Miss Egerton was not so tardy in the use of her eyes and ears, but stretching out her hand to the back of the box, where Thaddeus was standing by lady Sara's chair, she caught hold of his sleeve.

"There, Constantine:" cried she, "look at Adelbert! Now, that is exactly the figure *you* cut in your Polish trumpery two months ago."

The Count bowed with a forced smile, and glancing at the stage, replied:

"Then, for the first time in my life, I regret having followed a lady's advice; I think I must have lost by the change."

"Yes," rejoined she, "you have lost much fur, and much embroidery; but you look much more like a Christian."

The substance of these speeches was not lost on Mary, who continued to mark with redoubling interest, the changes which his countenance underwent along with the scene. As she sat forward, by a slight turn of her head, she could discern the smallest fluctuation of his features; and they were not a few; for, placing himself at the back of lady Sara's chair, he now leaned over, with his soul set in his eye, watching every motion of Mr. Charles Kemble.

Mary knew that Constantine was a Polander; and the surmise which she had entertained of his being unfortunate, received full corroboration at the scene wherein Adelbert is grossly insulted by the rich merchant; during the whole of which, she scarcely dared trust her eyes towards his flushed and agitated face.

The interview between Adelbert and Leopold commenced: when the former was describing his country's miseries with his own, Thaddeus, unable to bear it lon-

ger, unobserved by any but Mary, drew back into the box. In a moment or two, Mr. Charles Kemble made the following reply to an observation of Leopold's, that poverty is no dishonour.

"Certainly none to me! To Poland, to my struggling country, I sacrificed my wealth, as I would have sacrificed my life, if she had required it. My country is no more; and we are wanderers on a burthened earth, finding no refuge but in the hearts of the humane and virtuous."

The passion and force of these words could not fail of reaching the ears of Thaddeus. Mary's attention followed them to their object, by the heaving of whose breast, she plainly discovered the anguish of their effect. Her pitying heart fluttered. How willingly would she have approached him, and said something of sympathy, of consolation! but she might not; and she turned away her tearful eye, and looked again on the stage.

Lady Sara now stood up; hanging over Mary's chair, she listened with congenial emotions to the scene between Adelbert and the innocent Rose. Lady Sara felt it all in her own bosom; and, looking round to catch what was passing in the Count's mind, she beheld him leaning against a corner of the box with his head inclined to the curtain of the door."

"Mr. Constantine!" almost unconsciously escaped her lips. He started up immediately, and discovered, by the humidity of his eyes, why he had withdrawn. Her ladyship's tears were gliding down her cheeks. Miss Egerton, greatly amazed at the oddness of the scene, turned to Miss Beaufort, who a moment before having caught a glimpse of the distressed countenance of the Count, could only smile, and bow her head to Maria's observation.

Who is there that can enter into the bitterness of the heart? Who participate in that joy which dissolves and rarifies man to the essence of heaven? Soul must mingle with soul, and the invisible language of the spirit must speak. before this can be comprehended.

Mary, who felt ready to suffocate with the emotion which she repelled from her eyes, gladly affected to be *absorbed in the* business of the stage (not one object of *which she now saw*) and, with breathless attention, [illegible] *not one soft whisper*, which Lady Sara poured into [illegible] *ear of Thaddeus.*

"Why?" asked her ladyship, in a tremulous and low voice; "Why should we seek ideal miseries, when those of our own hearts are beyond alleviation? Happy Rose!" sighed her ladyship. "Constantine," continued she, "do not you think Adelbert consoled at least by the affections of that lovely woman?"

Like Miss Beaufort, Constantine had hitherto replied only with bows.

"Come," added lady Sara, laying her soft hand on his arm, and regarding him with a tenderness so uneqivocal that he cast his eyes to the ground, though he felt their compassion and sympathy touch his heart; "Come," repeated she, animated by the faint colour which tinged his cheek, "you know I have the care of this party; and I must not allow our only beau to be melancholy."

"I beg your pardon, lady Sara," returned he, in gratitude to her kind commiseration, pressing the hand that yet rested on his arm. "I am not very well. I wish I had not seen this play!"

Lady Sara sunk into the seat from whence she had arisen. He had never before, taken her hand, except when assisting her to her carriage; this pressure, shook her very soul, and awakened hopes which rendered her for a moment incapable of sustaining herself, or of venturing a reply.

There was something in the tones of lady Sara's voice, and in her manner, far more expressive than her words: a mutual sigh which breathed from her ladyship's bosom, and that of Thaddeus, as they sat down, made a cold shiver run from the head to the foot of Miss Beaufort. The surprise that Mary felt at the meaning of this emotion, caused a second tremor, and with a palpitating heart, she asked herself a few questions.

Could this interesting young man, whom every person of sense appeared to esteem and respect, could he sully his virtues by participating in a passion with a married woman? No; it was impossible.

Notwithstanding this decision, she determined to observe him narrowly; and be well convinced of his worth before she permitted him to augment the share of regard which he already possessed in her bosom.

With her head full of these reflections, she awaited the farce, without observing when it appeared. Indeed none present, knew any thing about this piece (to see

which they had professedly come to the theatre) excepting Miss Egerton, whose ever merry spirits had enjoyed the humour of *Totum* in the play, and now laughed heartily, though unaccompanied through the ridiculous whims of the farce.

Nothing that passed, could tottally disengage the mind of the Count from those remembrances which the recent drama had awakened. When the melting voice of lady Sara, in whispers, tried to recal his attention; by a start only, he evinced his recollection of not being alone. However, he felt the kindness of her motive; and exerted himself: by the time that the curtain drew, he had so far rallied his spirits as to attend to the civility of seeing the ladies safe out of the theatre.

Miss Egerton, laughing, as he assisted her into the carriage, said, "I verily believe, Mr. Constantine, had I glanced round during the play, I should have seen as pretty a lacrymal scene between you and lady Sara, as any on the stage. I won't have this flirting! I declare I will tell captain Roos ——."

She continued talking; but he, turning about to offer his services to Miss Beaufort, heard no more.

Miss Beaufort felt strangely; she felt cold and reserved; and, undesignedly, she appeared what she felt. There was a grave dignity in her air, accompanied with a collectedness and stillness in her before animated countenance, which astonished and chilled Thaddeus, though she bowed her head, and gave him her hand to put her into the coach.

In their way home, Miss Egerton ran over the merits of the play and farce; rallied Thaddeus on the "*tall Pole*," which she threatened should be his epithet whenever he offended her; and then flying from subject to subject, talked herself and her hearers so weary, that they mutually rejoiced when the carriage stopped in Grosvenor-place.

After they had severally paid their respects to lady Tinemouth, who being indisposed, was lying along the sofa, she desired Thaddeus to draw a chair near to her.

"I want to learn," said she, "what you think of our English Theatre?"

"Prithee, don't ask him!" cried Miss Egerton, pouring out a glass of wine, "we have seen a tremendous brother Pole of his, who I believe has 'hopped off' with

all his spirits! Why, he has been looking as rueful as a half-drowned man all the night; and for lady Sara, and, I could swear, Miss Beaufort too, they have been two Niobes, '*all tears.*' So good folks, I must drink better health to you to save myself from the vapours."

"What is all this, Mr. Constantine?" asked the countess, addressing Thaddeus, whose eyes were now fixed with grateful surprise on the blushing, though displeased face of Miss Beaufort.

"My weakness," replied he, sighing, and turning to ladyship: "The play relates to a native of Poland; one, who, like myself, an exile in a strange land, is subjected to sufferings and contumelies, which the bravest spirits may find hard to bear. Any man may combat misery; but even the most intrepid will shrink from insult. This, I believe is the sum of the story. Its resemblance, in some points to my own, affected me; and" added he, looking gratefully at lady Sara, and timidity towards Miss Beaufort; "if these ladies have sympathized with feelings, which I strove, but could not entirely conceal, I owe to it, the sweetest consolation that is now in the power of fate to bestow!"

"Poor Constantine!" cried Maria Egerton, patting his head with one hand, whilst with the other she wiped a tear from her always smiling eye, "forgive me, if I have hurt you. I like you vastly, though I must now and then laugh at you: you know I hate dismals; so let this tune enliven us all!" and flying to her piano, she played and sung two or three merry airs, till the Countess commanded her back to supper.

At this most sociable repast of the whole day, cheerfulness seemed again to disperse the gloom that threatened the circle. Thaddeus set the example. His unrestrained and elegant conversation, acquired renewed interest from the anguish he had driven back to his heart; like other beds through which a stream flows, it imparted an undescribable touchingness and poignancy to his sentiments and manner.

Mary now beheld him in his real character. Unmolested by the haughty presence of Miss Dundas, he became unreserved, intelligent, and enchanting. He was master of every subject; and discoursed on all, with a grace which corroborated her "waking visions," that he was, as some "*arch angel ruined.*"

With the increase of Miss Beaufort's admiration of the Count's fine talents, she gradually lost the recollection of what had occupied her mind relative to Lady Sara; and her own beautiful countenance dilating into confidence and delight, the evening passed away with pleasure, till the little party separated for their several homes.

Lady Tinemouth and Maria were fascinated by the lovely Miss Beaufort. Miss Beaufort was equally pleased with the Countess and her friend; but when thought on Thaddeus, she was surprised, interested, charmed.

Lady Sara Roos's reflections, were not less flattering: she dwelt with redoubled passion on that look from the Count's eyes, that touch of his hand; which she thought were signs of a reciprocal flame. Both actions were forgotten by him the moment they were committed; yet he was not ungrateful; but whilst he acknowledged her attentions, and assented to the loveliness of her form, he felt that she would lead him to the brink of a precipice, where, if he fell, he must sink to a depth, never to rise again.

He sought a refuge from such dangerous meditations, in the idea of the ingenuous Mary, on whose modest countenance, virtue seemed to have '*set her seal.*' Whilst thus recollecting the pitying kindness of her voice and looks, his heart owned the empire of purity; and in the contemplation of her unaffected excellence, he soon forgot the witcheries of lady Sara and her love.

CHAPTER III.

Next morning, when Thaddeus, according to custom, approached the General's bed to give him his coffee, he found him feverish, and his intellects more than usually unsettled.

The Count awaited with anxiety the arrival of the benevolent Cavendish, whom he expected: and when he appeared, he expressed his increased alarm. Dr. Cavendish having felt the patient's pulse, expressed a wish that he could be induced to take a little exercise. Thaddeus had often urged this necessity to his friend; and having met with constant refusals, he hopelessly repeated the entreaty now; when, to his surprise and satisfaction, the old man instantly consented.

Having seen him comfortably dressed (for the Count attended to these *minutiæ* with the care of a son) the doctor said, they must ride with him to Hyde Park, where he would put them out to walk till he had performed a visit to a sick person in Piccadilly, after which he would return, and take them home.

The General not only expressed pleasure at the drive; but, as the air felt warm and balmy (it being about the beginning of June) made no objection to the proposed walk.

He admired the Park, the Serpentine River, the cottage on its bank, and seemed highly diverted by the horsemen and carriages in the ring. The pertinency of his remarks, affording Thaddeus a ray of hope that his senses had not entirely lost their union with reason, he was contemplating with awakened confidence what might be the happy effects of constant exercise, when the General's complaints of weariness, obliged him to stop near Piccadilly gate, and await the arrival of the doctor's coach.

He was standing against the railing, supporting Butzou; and, with his hat in his hand, shading his friend's face from the sun; when two or three carriages driving in, he met the eyes of Miss Euphemia Dundas, who, *pulling*, the check-string, cried out, "Bless me, *Mr. Constantine!* Who expected to see you here? Why

your note told us, that you were confined with a sick friend."

Thaddeus bowed to her, and still sustaining the debilitated frame of the General on his arm, advanced to the side of the coach. Miss Beaufort now looked out, and expressed her hope that his invalid was better.

"This is the friend I mentioned," said the Count, turning his eyes on the mild features of Butzou; "his physician having ordered him to walk, I accompanied him here."

"Dear me! How ill you look, Sir," cried Euphemia, addressing the poor invalid; "but you are attended by a kind friend."

"My dear lord!" exclaimed the old man, not regarding what she said, "I must go home; call the carriage, you know I am wanted."

Euphemia was again opening her mouth to speak, but Miss Beaufort perceiving a look of distress in the expressive features of Mr. Constantine, interrupted her by saying, "Good morning, Mr. Constantine: I know we detain you, and oppress that gentleman, whose pardon we ought to beg." She bowed her head, with an expression of respectful commisseration beaming from her eyes upon the General, whose white hairs were blowing about his face as he attempted to pull the Count back to the pathway.

"My friend cannot thank you, kind Miss Beaufort," cried Thaddeus with a look of gratitude, that made her blush, "but I do from my heart!"

"Here it is! Pray, my lord, come along!" cried Butzou: Thaddeus seeing that this information was right, bowed to the ladies; and their carriage drove off.

Though the wheels of lady Dundas's coach rolled away from the retreating figures of Thaddeus and his friend, the images of both, occupied the meditations of Euphemia and Miss Beaufort, whilst *tete-a-tete*, and in silence, they made the circuit of the Park.

When the carriage again passed the spot on which the subject of their thoughts had stood, Mary, almost mechanically, looked out of the window towards the gate.

"Is he gone yet?" asked Euphemia, sighing deeply.

Mary drew in her head, with the quickness of conscious guilt; and, whilst a colour stained her face, that of itself might have betrayed her prevarication, she asked, "Who?"

"Mr. Constantine," replied Euphemia, with a second sigh, "Did you remark, Mary, how gracefully he supported that sick old gentleman? Was it not the personification of Youth upholding the fainting steps of Age? He put me in mind of the charming young prince, whose name I forget, leading the old Belisarius."

"You are an enthusiast, Euphemia!" returned Mary, striving to smile, and wondering within herself, what could be the meaning of those appellations with which the old man had addressed Thaddeus.

"So all tell me," replied Euphemia; "so all say, who neither possess the sensibility nor the candour to allow, that great merit may exist without being associated with great rank. Yet," cried the little beauty in a more animated tone, "I have my doubts, Mary, of his being what he seems. Did you observe the sick gentleman call him *my lord*?"

"I did," returned Mary, "and I was not surprised. Such manners as Mr. Constantine's, are not to be acquired in a cottage."

"Dear, dear Mary!" cried Euphemia, flinging her ivory arms round her neck; "how I love you for these words! you are generous, you think nobly, and I will no longer hesitate to—to" and, breaking off, she hid her head in Miss Beaufort's bosom.

Mary's heart throbbed, her cheeks grew pale, and she felt a secret wish to stop the tide of Miss Dundas's confidence.

"Dear Euphemia," answered she, "your regard for this interesting exile is very praiseworthy. But beware of ——" she hesitated; a conscious twitch in her own breast, stayed the warning that was rising to her tongue; and, blushing at a motive which she could not at the instant assign to friendship, selfishness or envy, she touched the cheek of Euphemia with her quivering lips.

Euphemia had finished the sentence for her, and raising her head, exclaimed: "What should I fear in esteeming Mr. Constantine? Is he not the most captivating creature in the world? And for his beauty! Oh, Mary, he is so beautiful, that when the library is filled with the handsomest men about town, the moment Constantine enters, their reign is over. I compare them with his godlike figure, and I feel as one looking at the sun; all other objects appear dim and shapeless."

"I hope," returned Mary, rubbing her forehead with her hand, her head beginning to ache strangely, "that Mr. Constantine does not owe your friendship to his fine person? I think his mental qualities are more deserving such a gift."

"Don't look so severe, dear Mary!" cried Miss Dundas, observing that she cast down her eyes, with a contracting brow; "are you displeased with me?"

"Mary's displeasure was at the austerity of her own words, and not at her auditor. Raising her eyes with a smile both in them and on her lips, she said, "I do not mean, my dear girl, to be severe; but I would wish, for the honour of my sex, that the objects which attract either our love or our compassion, should have something more precious than mere personal beauty, to engage our interest."

"Well. I shall soon be satisfied!" cried Euphemia in a gayer tone, as they drove through Grosvenor gate; "We all know that Constantine is sensible and accomplished: He writes poetry like an angel, both in French and Italian: I have hundreds of mottoes composed by him; one of them, Mary, is on that work-box I gave you yesterday: and what is more, I will ask him to-morrow, why that old gentleman called him *my lord*? If he be a lord!" exclaimed she.

"What then?" inquired the eloquent eyes of Mary.

"Don't look so impertinent, my dear," cried the now animated beauty, "I positively won't say another word to you to-day."

Miss Beaufort's head-ache had become so painful, that she felt relieved when Euphemia ceased, and the carriage drew up to lady Dundas's door.

A night of almost unremitted sleep, performed such good effects on the frame and intellects of general Butzou, that the ever-anxious Thaddeus received with pleasure the opinion of doctor Cavendish, that he was so much better, as to allow them room to hope the best consequences from a constant repetition of the same air and exercise. Accordingly, after the ride and walk had been repeated the following day, the Count left his friend to his maps and little Nanny, and once more took the way to Harley-street.

He found only Miss Dundas and her sister in the study. Mary (against her will, which she opposed wi

cause it was her will,) had gone out a shopping with Miss Dorothy Somerset and lady Dundas.

Miss Dundas left the room the moment she had finished her lessons.

Euphemia, delighted at being *tete-a-tête* with Thaddeus, forgot that she was to act the fascinating character of Madame d'Arblay's heroine; and, shutting her book the instant Diana disappeared, all at once opened her attack on his confidence.

To the eager questions, which the few words of the General had excited, the Count offered no other reply, than the information, that his poor friend knew not what he said, having been a long time in a state of mental derangement.

This explanation caused a momentary mortification in the fanciful Euphemia, but, as it was a property of her mind, to erect a new airy castle immediately on the sinking of the old, she soon rallied, and embraced the supposition, that he "might be a duke, which was more than a lord!" at any rate, let him be what he would, he charmed her, and had much ado to parry the encreasing boldness of her speeches, without letting her see that they were understood.

"You are very diffident, Constantine;" cried she, looking down, "if I consider you worthy of my friendship, why should *you* make disqualifying assertions?"

"Every man, madam," returned Thaddeus bowing as he rose from his chair, "must feel himself diffident of deserving the honour of your notice."

"There is no man living," "replied she, blushing, "to whom I would offer my friendship but yourself."

Thaddeus bit his lip; he knew not what to answer; bowing a second time, he stretched out his hand, and drew his hat towards him. Euphemia's eyes followed the movement.

"You are in a prodigious haste, Mr. Constantine!"

"I feel that I intrude, Madam; and I have promised to be with my sick friend at an early hour."

"Well, you may go, since you are obliged;" returned the pretty Euphemia, rising up, and smiling sweetly as she laid one hand on his arm, and put the other into her tucker; she drew out a little white leather souvenir, marked with the words 'Toujour cher,' and slipping it into his hand, "There, receive that, Constantine; and

retain it as the first pledge of Euphemia Dundas's friendship."

Thaddeus coloured as he took it; and again having recourse to the convenient reply of a bow, left the room, quite overcome with vexation.

There was an indelicacy in this absolutely wooing conduct of Miss Euphemia, that nothwithstanding her beauty, and the softness which was its vehicle, struck him with the deepest disgust. He could not trace real affection, either in her words or manner; and, that any woman, instigated by a mere whim, should lay aside the decent reserves of her sex, and actually court his regard, surprised, whilst it impelled him, to loath her.

They who adopt Euphemia's sentiments, are little aware of the conclusion which society deduce from such intemperate behaviour. That mistaken creature, who, either at the impulse of her own disposition, or the mandates of example, is led to throw off the veil of modesty, literally '*forsakes the guide of her youth*' and leaves herself open to every attack which man can devise against virtue. By levelling the barrier raised by nature, she herself exposes the hold of her peace; and may find, too late for recovery, that what modesty has abandoned, is not long held by honour.

Euphemia's affected attachment, suggested to the Count a few unpleasant recollections respecting the fervent and unequivocal passion of lady Sara. Though guilty, it sprung from a head-long ardour of disposition, which formed at once the error and its palliation. He saw that love was not welcomed by her, (at least he thought so,) as a plaything, but struggled with as a foe; he had witnessed her tortures, he pitied them! and, to render her happy, would gladly have made any sacrifice short of his future tranquillity. Too well assured, of being all the world to lady Sara; the belief, that Miss Euphemia liked him only from idleness, caprice, and contradiction, caused him to repay her overtures with decided contempt.

When he arrived at home, he threw the pocket-book, whose unambiguous motto made him laugh at her and *himself, into a* drawer, and looking round his humble *room, whose* wicker chairs, oil-clothed floor, and unc*urtained* windows, announced any thing but splendour;

"Poor Euphemia!" thought he, "how would you be dismayed, were the indigent Constantine really to take you at your word, and bring you home to such a cheerless habitation!"

The repetition of the late scene, which was communicated to Miss Beaufort from Euphemia, failed in producing a similar effect on her.

Mary could discover no reason why the old gentleman's mental derangement should dignify his friend with titles that he had never borne. She remarked, that his answer to Euphemia appeared evasive; she remembered his emotion and apology on seeing Mr. C. Kemble in *Adelbert;* and, uniting with these facts. his manners, and acquirements, so far beyond the charges of a vulgar education, she could retain no doubt of his being at least well born.

This mysterious Constantine, occupied her hourly thoughts during the space of two months; in which time, she had full opportunity to learn much of a character with whom she associated almost every day. At lady Tinemouth's (one of whose evening guests she frequently became) she beheld him disrobed of that armour of reserve, which was his best repellant against the rude attacks in Harley-street.

In the house of the Countess, Mary saw him welcomed like a certain idolized being, before whose cheering influence, all frowns and clouds must disappear. When he entered, the smile resumed its seat on the languid features of lady Tinemouth; Miss Egerton's eye, lighted up to keener archness; lady Sara's voluptuous orbs floated in pleasure; and for Mary herself, her breast heaved, her cheeks glowed, her hands trembled, a quick sigh escaped her bosom; and whilst she remained in his presence, she believed that happiness had lost its usual evanescent property, and had become tangible, to hold and press upon the heart.

Mary, who questioned the cause of these tremors on her pillow; bedewed it with delicious though bitter tears, when her alarmed soul whispered, that she felt for this amiable foreigner, '*a something than friendship dearer.*'

"Ah! *is it to come to this?*" cried she, pressing down *her saturated eye-lids* with her hand, "am I at last to *love a man, who perhaps never casts a thought on me?* *How despicable shall* I become in my own eyes!"

The pride of woman, puts this charge to her taken heart: that heart which seems tempered of the purest clay, and warmed with the fire of heaven; that tender and disinterested heart, makes as its appeal—What is love? Is it not an admiration of all that is beautiful in nature and morality? Is it not a union of loveliness with truth? Is it not a passion, whose sole object is the rapture of contemplating the supreme beauty of this combined character?

"Where then," cried the enthusiastic Mary, wiping the tears from her cheek, "where is the shame that can be annexed to my loving Constantine? If it be honourable to love delineated excellence; it must be equally so, to love it when embodied in a human shape. Such it is in Constantine: and if love be the reflected light of virtue, I may cease to arraign myself of what I otherwise would have scorned. Therefore, Constantine," cried she, raising her clasped hands, whilst renewed tears streamed over her face, "I will love thee! I will pray for thy happiness, though its partner should be Euphemia Dundas!"

Mary's eager imagination, would not allow her to perceive those obstacles, in the shapes of pride and prudence, which would stand in the way of his obtaining Euphemia's hand; its light, shewed to her, only a rival, in the person of the little beauty; from whose direct confidence she afterwards retreated with abhorrence.

Had Euphemia been more deserving of Constantine, Miss Beaufort believed she would have felt less reluctant to hear that she also loved him. But Mary could not avoid seeing, that Miss E. Dundas possessed little to ensure comfort, if mere beauty and accidental flights of good-humour, were not admitted into the scale. She was weak in understanding, timid of principle, absurd in almost every sentiment she adopted; and, as for love, true, dignified, respectable love, she knew nothing of the feeling.

Whilst Miss Beaufort meditated on this meagre schedule of her rival's merits, the probability that even such a man as Constantine, might sacrifice himself to flattery and splendour, stung her to the soul.

The more she reflected on it the more she conceived it likely. Euphemia was considered a beauty of the day; her affectation of refined prettinesses, pleased many, and

might charm Constantine: she was mistress of fifty thousand pounds; and did not esteem it necessary to conceal from her favourite, the empire she had acquired. Perhaps there was generosity in this openness; If so, what might it not affect on a grateful disposition? or rather, (her mortified heart, murmured in the words of her aunt Dorothy;) How might it not operate on the mind of one of that sex, which at the best, is equally moved by caprice, as sentiment?

Mary blushed at the appropriation of this opinion; and, angry with herself, for the injustice which a lurking jealousy had induced her to throw on Constantine's noble nature, she resolved, whatever where her struggles, to promote his happiness to the utmost of her power.

The next morning, when Miss Beaufort opened the study door, she found Mr. Constantine at his station, literally baited between Miss Dundas and her honourable lover. At such moments, Mary always appeared the kindest of the kind. She loved to see Constantine smile; and, whenever she could produce that effect, by turning the spleen of these polite sneerers against themselves, the smiles which entered her heart afforded a banquet for hours after his departure.

Mary drew out her work (which was a purse that she was netting for lady Tinemouth) and taking a seat beside Thaddeus, strove along with Euphemia, to occupy his attention entirely, that he might not catch even one of those insolent glances, which were passing from Lascelles, and a new ally, whom he had obtained in the pretty lady Villiers.

This lady seemed to take extreme pleasure in accosting Thaddeus by the appellation of "friend, my good man, Mr. what's your name?" and similar squibs of insult, with which the prosperous assail the unfortunate. Such random shots often inflict the most galling wounds.

However, *friend, my good man, and Mr. what's your name*, disappointed this lady's small artillery of effect. He seemed invulnerable, both to her insolence, and to her affectation; for to be admired by even Miss Dundas's contemned tutor, was not to be despised: though at the very moment, she supposed her haughtiness had impressed him *with a high* sense of his own meanness, and a *high conception of* her dignity.

She jumped about the room; assumed infantine airs,

played with Euphemia's lap-dog, fondled it, seated herself on the floor, and swept the carpet with her fine flaxen tresses: but she performed the whole routine of captivation in vain: Thaddeus recollected having seen this pretty full-grown baby, in her appropriate character of a profligate wife, pawning her own and her husband's property; he remembered this, and the united shafts of her charms and folly, fell unnoticed to the ground.

When Thaddeus took his leave, Miss Beaufort, as was her custom, retired, for an hour to read in her dressing room, before she directed her attention to the toilet. She opened a book, and ran over a few pages of lord St. Alban; but his reasoning was too abstracted for her present frame of mind, and she threw the volume down.

She dipped a pen in the ink-stand. Being a letter in debt to her guardian, she thought she could defray it now. She accomplished "Dear Sir," and stopped. Whilst she rested on her elbow, and heedless of what she was doing, bit the feather of her quill to pieces, no other idea offered itself, than the figure of Thaddeus, sitting '*severe in youthful beauty!*' She saw him surrounded by those contumelies which the unworthy bestow on the merit they can neither emulate nor overlook.

Uneasy with herself, she pushed the table away; and, leaning her cheek on her arm, gazed into the rainbow varieties of a beautiful pot of flowers which occupied the fire-place. Even their gay colours appeared to fade before her sight, and present to her vacant eye, the form of Thaddeus, with the melancholy air that shaded his movements. She turned round, but she could not disengage herself from the spirit that was within her: his half-suppressed sighs, seemed yet to thrill in her ear, and weigh on her heart.

"Excellent young man!" cried she, starting up, "why are you so wretched; O! lady Tinemouth, why have you told me so much of his virtues? Why have I convicted myself, that what you said is true? Oh! why was I formed to love superior goodness?"

The natural reply to these self-demanded questions, suggesting itself, she assented with a tear to the whisperings of her feelings, that when philosophy would banish the affections, it is incapable of filling their place.

She rung the bell for her maid.

"Marshall, who dines with lady Dundas to-day?"

"I believe Ma'am," replied the girl, "Mr. Lascelles, lady Villiers, and the Marquis Elesmere."

"I detest them all three!" cried Mary, with a petulance to which she was little liable; "dress me how you like, I am indifferent to my appearance."

Marshall obeyed the commands of her lady, who beat her eyes on a little volume of poems written by Egerton Brydges, till her maid having fixed the last pearl comb in her beautiful hair, exclaimed, "Dear Ma'am, you are so pale to-day! shall I put on the least bit of rouge?"

"No," returned Mary, glancing a look over her languid features, "no, Marshall, I appear as well as I desire. Any chance of passing unnoticed in company I despise, is worth retaining. No one will be here this evening, that I care to please."

She was mistaken; other company had been invited besides them whom the maid had mentioned; and Miss Beaufort continued from seven o'clock till ten, the period at which the ladies left the table, annoyed to death by the insipid and pert compliments of the men.

Sick of their subjectless and dragging conversation, she gladly followed lady Dundas to the drawing room; where, opening her netting case, she took her station beneath one of the lustres in a remote corner, hoping to find a retreat from the ceaseless nonsense of her ladyship's guests.

After half an hour had elapsed, the gentlemen from below, recruited by fresh company, thronged in fast; and, notwithstanding it was styled a family party, Miss Beaufort saw many strange faces, amongst whom she observed an old clergyman, who was looking about for a chair. The yawning Lascelles threw himself along the only vacant sofa, just as the gentleman approached.

Miss Beaufort immediately resigned her place, and was moving on to another room, when the coxcomb springing up, begged permission to admire her work; and taking it from her, pursued her, twisting the purse into a rope round his fingers, declaring how pretty it was, whilst he thrust (in his own opinion) his pretty hand into her eyes.

Mary walked forward, smiling with contempt, till they reached the painted saloon; where the Miss Dun-

lasses were closely engaged in conversation with the Marquis of Elesmere.

Lascelles, who trembled for his Golconda, at this sight, stepped briskly up. Mary, who did not wish to lose sight of her purse, whilst in the power of such a *Lothario*, followed him, and placed herself against the arm of the sofa on which Euphemia sat.

Lascelles, now bowed his scented locks to Diana in vain. Lord Elesmere was describing the last heat at Newmarket, and the attention of neither lady could be drawn aside.

The beau became so irritated by the perfect neglect of Euphemia, and so nettled at her sister's overlooking him, that assuming a gay air, he struck Miss Dundas's arm a smart stroke with Miss Beaufort's purse; and laughing, to shew the strong opposition between his broad white teeth, and the miserable mouth of his lordly rival; hoped to alarm him by his familiarity, and to obtain a triumph over the ladies by degrading them in the eyes of the peer.

"Miss Dundas," demanded he, "who the devil was that, your sister walked with the other day in Portland place?"

"Me!" cried Euphemia, surprised.

"Aye," returned he, "I was crossing Weymouth-street, when I perceived you accost a strange looking man. You may remember, you sauntered with him as far as William Miller's. I would have joined you, but seeing the family standing in the balcony, I did not chuse them to suppose, that perhaps I brought you into such low company."

"Who was it, Euphemia?" inquired Miss Dundas, in a severe tone.

"I wonder he affects to be ignorant," answered her sister, angrily, "he knows very well, it was only Mr. Constantine."

"And who is Mr. Constantine?" demanded the marquis. Mr. Lascelles shrugged his shoulders.

"E'faith, my lord! a fellow that nobody knows; a teacher of languages, giving himself the airs of a prince. A writer of poetry; and a man who will draw you, your house and dogs, if you will pay him for it."

Mary's heart swelled.

"*What*, a French emigrant?" drawled his lordship,

dropping his lip; "and the lovely Euphemia wishes to sooth his sorrows."

"No, my lord" stammered Euphemia, "he is—he is——"

"What!" interrupted Lascelles, with a malicious grin, "a wandering beggar; that thrusts himself into society, which may some day repay his insolence with chastisement! For those who encourage him, they had better beware of being scouted by the world. I understand that his chief protectress, is lady Tinemouth; and, by way of an auxiliary, lady Sara Roos evinces that she is not quite inconsolable at the absence of her husband."

Mary, pale and trembling, at the scandal his last words would have insinuated, had opened her lips to speak, when Miss Dundas (whose angry eyes darted from her sister to her lover) exclaimed, "Mr. Lascelles, I know not what you mean. The subject you have taken up, is below my discussion; yet, I must confess, if Euphemia ever have disgraced herself so far as to be seen walking with a school-master, she deserves all you have said."

"And why might I not walk with him, sister?" asked the poor culprit, suddenly recovering from her confusion, and looking pertly up, "who knew that he was not a gentleman?"

"Every body, ma'am" interrupted Lascelles; "and when a young woman of fashion condescends to be seen equalizing herself with any creature depending on his wits for support, she is very likely to incur the contempt of her acquaintance, and the censure of her friends."

"She is, Sir" said Mary, holding down her indignant heart, and forcing her countenance to appear serene; "for she ought to know, that those men of fashion, who have no wits, either to be their support or ornament, if they did not prescribe talents from their circle, must soon find "*the greater glory dim the less.*"

"True, Madam" cried lord Berrington, who having entered during the contest, had stood unobserved till this moment; "and that gold title, will prove mere dross and bubble, when struck by the Ithuriel touch of Genius."

Mary turned round at the sound of his philanthropic voice, and gave him one of those glances which go immediately to the soul.

"Come, Miss Beaufort," cried he, taking her hand, "I see the young musician, yonder, who has so recently astonished the public. I believe he is going to sing. Let us leave this ill-natured corner, and seek harmony by his side."

Mary obeyed the impulse of his arm, and seating herself a few paces off the musical party, Berrington took his station behind her chair.

When the finest, and most melting voice in the world, had ceased the last stanza of "*From shades of night*;" Mary's eyes, full of admiration, and a feeling which rapid association rendered more intense, remained fixed on the singer: lord Berrington smiled at the vivid expression of her countenance; and, as the inimitable Braham moved from the instrument, exclaimed. "Come, come, Miss Beaufort, I won't allow that Orphan boy to run away with all your attention; listen to my merits. Do you know, if it were not for my timely lectures, little Lascelles would grow the most insufferable gossip about town? There is not a match, nor a divorce near St. James's, of which he cannot repeat to you all the whys and wherefores. I call him Sir Benjamin Backbite; and I believe he hates me worse than the devil."

"Such a man's dislike," rejoined Mary, "is the highest encomium he can bestow. I never yet heard him speak well of a person who did not resemble himself."

"And he is not consistently generous even there," resumed the viscount, "I am not sure, that I have always heard him speak in the gentlest terms of Miss Dundas. Yet, on this topic, I cannot quite blame him; for on my honour, she provokes me beyond any woman I know."

"Many women," replied Mary, smiling, "would esteem that a flattering instance of power."

"And, like every thing that flatters," returned he, "it would tell a falsehood. A shrew can provoke the man who detests her. And for Miss Dundas," continued he, "notwithstanding her parade of learning, her judgment has not been taught to decide rightly; consequently she generally espouses the wrong side of the argument; and I may say, with somebody whose name I *have forgotten*, that any one who knows Diana Dundas, *never need be* at a loss for a woman to call impertinent."

"*You* are not usually so severe, my lord!"

"I am not usually so sincere, Miss Beaufort," answered he, "but I see that you think for yourself; therefore I make no hesitation in speaking what I think—to you."

Mary bowed her head. Lady Dundas at that moment beckoned him across the room. She compelled him to sit down to whist. He cast a rueful glance at Mary, and took a seat opposite his costly partner.

"That is a very worthy young man," observed the old clergyman, to whom Miss Beaufort, at the beginning of the evening had resigned her chair; "I presume, Madam, you have been honouring him with your conversation."

"Yes," returned Mary, noticing the benign countenance of the venerable speaker; "I have not had the pleasure of long knowing lord Berrington, but what I have seen of his character is highly to his advantage."

"I was intimate in his father's house for years," rejoined the gentleman; "I knew his lordship from a boy. If he have faults, he owes them to his mother, who doated on him, and rather directed his care to the adornment of a really handsome person, than to the cultivation of talents, which he has since learnt to appreciate."

"I believe lord Berrington to be very sensible, and, above all, very humane;" returned Mary.

"He is so," replied the old gentleman; "yet, it was not till he had attained the age of twenty-two, that he appeared to know that he had any thing to do in the world, besides dressing, and attending on the fair. His taste directed the first, whilst the urbanity of his disposition gave birth to the latter. When Berrington arrived at his title, he was about five-and-twenty. Sorrow for the death of his amiable parents, who died in the same month, afforded him leisure to find his reason. He discovered that he had been acting a part beneath him; and he soon implanted on the old stock, those excellent acquirements of the mind, which you see he possesses. In spite of this regeneration," continued he, casting a good-humoured glance on the dove-coloured silk stockings, breeches, and waistcoat of the viscount; "you perceive first impressions will remain. He loves dress, but he *loves justice* and philanthropy better."

"*This eulogy*, Sir," said Mary, "affords me real pleasure. May I know the name of the gentleman with whom I have the honour of conversing?"

"My name is Blackmore," returned he.

"Dr. Blackmore?"

"The same."

He was the same Dr. Blackmore, whose humanity had been struck with the appearance of the count Sobieski at the Hummums; and who, being a rare visitor at lady Dundas's, had never, by any chance, met a second time with the object of his compassion.

"I am happy," resumed Miss Beaufort, "in having the good fortune to meet a gentleman, of whom I have so frequently heard my guardian express his sentiments of esteem."

"Ah!" replied he, "I have not seen him since the death of his lady. I hope that he and his son are well?"

"Perfectly" returned she.

"You, Madam, I suppose, are my lady's niece, Miss Beaufort?"

"I am, Sir."

"Well, I rejoice at this incident," rejoined he, pressing her hand; "I knew your mother when she was a lovely girl. She used to spend her summers with the late lady Somerset, then Miss Beaufort, at the castle. It was there I had the honour of cultivating her friendship."

"I do not remember ever having seen my mother," replied the now thoughtful Mary. Dr. Blackmore, observing the expression of her countenance, smiled kindly, and said, "I fear I am to blame here. This is a sad way of beginning an acquaintance to which I introduced myself. But your goodness must pardon me," continued he, "for I have so long accustomed myself to speak what I like, to them I like, that sometimes, as in this case, I undesignedly inflict pain."

"Not in this case," returned Mary; "I shall always feel pleasure in listening to a friend of my mother's; and particularly so, when he speaks in her praise."

The breaking up of the card tables, prevented any further conversation: and lord Berrington again approached Miss Beaufort, exclaimed, as he perceived her companion, "Ah! my good doctor; what, you have presented yourself at this fair shrine? I declare, you eccentric folk may dare any thing. Whilst you are free, Miss Beaufort," added he, turning to her, "adopt this bit of advice, which a good lady once gave me, and

which I have implicitly followed, "When you are young, get the character of an oddity, and it seats you in an easy chair for life."

Mary was interrupted in her reply, by a general stir amongst the company; who, now that cards were over, like bees and wasps, were swarming about the room, gathering and stinging as they passed.

At two, the house was cleared; and Mary exhausted, threw herself on her pillow, to think, and dream of Thaddeus.

CHAPTER V.

If it be true what the vivid imaginations of poets have often asserted. that when the soul dreams, it is in the actual presence of those beings whose images present themselves to its slumbers, then have the spirits of Thaddeus and Mary been commingled at the hour of midnight; then has the young Sobieski again visited his distant country; again seen it victorious; again knelt before his sainted parent.

From such visions as these, did Thaddeus awake in the morning, after having spent the preceding evening with lady Finemouth.

He had walked with her ladyship in Hyde-Park till a late hour. By the mild light of the moon, which shone brightly through the still balmy air of a midsummer night, they took their way twice along the shadowy bank of the Serpentine.

There is a solemn appeal to the soul in the repose of nature, that "makes itself be felt." No syllable from either Thaddeus or the Countess, broke the universal silence. Thaddeus looked around, on the clear expanse of water overshadowed by the long reflection of the deepening woods: then raising his eyes to that beautiful planet, which has excited the tenderest sensations in every feeling breast, since the beginning of the world; he drew a deep sigh. The Countess echoed it.

"In such a night as this, said Thaddeus, in a low voice as if afraid to disturb the sleeping deity of the place, "I used to walk the ramparts of Villanow, with my dear departed mother, and gaze on that lovely orb: when I was far distant from her, I have looked at it from the door of my tent, and, fancying that her eyes were then fixed on the same object with my own, I found happiness in the idea."

Thaddeus felt a tear stealing down his cheek. That moon yet shone brightly, but his mother's eyes were closed in the grave.

"Villanow!" repeated the Countess in a tone of surprise, "surely, that was the seat of the brave Palatine *of Masovia!* You have discovered yourself, Constantine! I am much mistaken, if you be not his grandson, *Thaddeus Sobieski?*"

Thaddeus had allowed the remembrance pressing on his mind, to draw him into a speech, which he found had disclosed to the quick apprehension of the Countess, what his pride would for ever have concealed.

"I have indeed betrayed my secret;" cried he, incapable of denying it, "but, dear lady Tinemouth, as you value my feelings, never let it escape your lips. Having long considered you as my best friend, loved you as a parent, I forgot in the recollection of my beloved mother now no more, that I had withheld any of my history from you."

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed her ladyship, after a moment's pause, in which ten thousand admiring and pitying reflections thronged on her mind, "Is it possible? Can it be the count Sobieski, that brave and illustrious youth, of whom every foreigner spoke with wonder? Can it be him, that I behold in the poor unfriended Constantine?"

"Even so; returned Thaddeus, pressing her hand; "my country is no more. I am now forgotten by the world, as I have been by fortune. I have nothing to do on the earth, but to fulfil the few duties which friendship has enjoined; and then, it will be indifferent to me how soon I am laid in its bosom."

"You are too young, dear Constantine, (for I am yet to call you by that name) to despair of happiness, being reserved for you."

"No, my dear lady Tinemouth, I do not cheat myself with such hope; I am not so importunate with the gracious Being who gave me life and reason. He bestowed on me for a while, the tenderest connections; a mother, a grandfather, friends, rank, honours, glory: all these were crushed in the fall of Poland; yet I survive. I only seek resignation, and I have found it: it cost me many a struggle; but the contest was due to the decrees of that all-wise Creator, who gave my first years to happiness."

"Inestimable young man!" cried the Countess, wiping the flowing tears from her eyes, "you teach misfortune dignity! Not when all Warsaw rose in a body to thank you as one of its bravest deliverers; not when the king received you in the senate with open arms; could you have appeared to me so worthy of admiration, as at this moment, when, conscious of having been all

this, you submit to the bitterest storms of fate, because you believe them to be the will of your Maker! Ah! little does Miss Beaufort think, when seated by your side, that she is conversing with the very hero whom she has so often wished to see!"

"Miss Beaufort!" echoed Thaddeus, his heart glowing with delight. "Did she ever hear of me by the name of Sobieski?"

"Who has not?" returned the Countess, "every heart that could be interested by suffering virtue, has heard, and must well remember, the calamities of your country. Whilst the newspapers of the day, informed us of the struggles which Poland made for liberty; they noticed amongst the first of her champions, the Palatine of Masovia, Kosciuszko, and yourself. Many an evening have I spent with lady Somerset and Mary Beaufort, lamenting the fate of that devoted kingdom."

During this declaration, a variety of transporting emotions agitated the mind of Thaddeus; till recollecting with a bitter pang, the shameless ingratitude of Pembroke, and the cruel possibility of being recognized by the earl of Tinemouth as his son; he exclaimed, "My dearest Madam, I entreat, that what I have revealed to you, may never be divulged! Miss Beaufort's friendship would indeed be happiness; but I cannot purchase even that, at the expense of feelings which are knit with my life."

"How?" cried the Countess, "Is not your name, and all its attendant ideas, an honour that the proudest man might boast?"

Thaddeus pressed her ladyship's hand gratefully to his heart.

"You are kind! very kind! Yet, I cannot retract. Confide, dear lady Tinemouth, in the justice of my resolution. I could not bear cold pity; I could not bear the heartless comments of people, who, pretending to compassion, would load me with a heavier sense of my calamities. Besides, there are persons in England, who are so much the objects of my aversion, that I would rather die than have them know that I exist. Therefore, on these grounds let me implore you to preserve my secret."

Lady Tinemouth saw by the earnestness of his manner, that she ought to comply; and, without further

hesitation, promised all the silence on the subject he could require.

This long, moonlight conversation, by awakening those dormant remembrances, which were cherished, though hidden in his bosom, gave birth to an effort of imagination that painted within the rapid series of his tumultuous dreams, the images of every being whom he had ever loved, or now continued to regard with interest.

Proceeding next morning towards Harley-street, he pondered on what had happened; and pleased that he had, though unpremeditatedly, paid the just compliment of his entire confidence, to the uncommon friendship of the Countess; he arrived at lady Dundas's door, before he was sensible of the ground he had passed over; and, in a few minutes afterwards was ushered into his accustomed purgatory.

When the servant opened the study door, Miss Euphemia was again alone. Thaddeus recoiled, but he could not retreat.

"Come in, Mr. Constantine," cried the little beauty, in a languid tone; "my sister is gone to the riding-school with Mr. Lascelles. Miss Beaufort wanted me to drive out with her and my mother; but I preferred waiting for you."

The Count bowed; and, almost retreating with fear of what might next be said, he gladly heard a thundering knock at the door, and, a moment after, the voice of Miss Dundas ascending the stairs.

He had just opened his books, when she entered. followed by her lover. Panting under a heavy riding-habit, she flung herself on a sofa, and began to villify "the odious heat of Fozard's odious place;" and telling Euphemia she would play truant to day, ordered her to attend to her lessons.

Owing to the warmth of the weather, Thaddeus came out this morning without boots; and it being the first time that the fine proportion of his limb, had been seen by any of the present company, excepting Euphemia; Lascelles, bursting with a disdain of such insignificant distinctions, (which he would not call envy) measured the Count's beautiful leg with his insolent eyes; then, *declaring he was quite in a furnace, took the corner of his glove, and waving it to and fro, half muttered, "Come gentle air."*

"*The fairer* Lascelles *cries!*" exclaimed Euphemia, looking off her exercise.

"What! does your master teach you wit?" drawled the coxcomb, with a particular emphasis.

Thaddeus affecting not to hear, continued to direct his pupil.

The indefatigable Lascelles having observed the complacence with which the Count always regarded Miss Beaufort, determined the goad should fret; and drawing out of his pocket the netting which he had taken the night before from Mary, exclaimed, "'Fore heaven, here is my little Beaufort's purse."

Thaddeus started, and unconsciously looking up, beheld the well-known work of Mary, dangling in the hand of Lascelles. He felt sensations unknown to him; his eyes became dim, and hardly knowing what he saw or said, he pursued the lesson with encreased velocity.

The malicious puppy, having found his malice take effect; with a careless air, threw his clumsy limbs on the vacant part of the sofa, which Miss Dundas had quitted to seat herself nearer the window, and cried, in a voice of sudden recollection.

"By the bye, that Miss Mary Beaufort, when she chuses to be sincere, is a sad little aristocrat."

"You may as well tell me," replied Miss Dundas, with a contemptuous curl of her lip, "that she is the Empress of Russia."

"I beg your pardon," cried he, raising his voice, at his judgment being doubted; "I will prove it to you. When she gave me this gew-gaw," added he, rumpling the purse in his hand, "she told me an everlasting story about some friend of hers, whose music-master, having mistaken some condescensions on her part, had dared to snatch a kiss from her snowy fingers as they were flying over the strings of her harp. You cannot imagine how Beaufort's pretty eyes blazed as she related this tale; I verily believe, had it been herself, she would have given poor Tweedledum a flourish across the cheek."

Miss Dundas laughed.

"These energetic young ladies, possess not the gentlest passions in the world; and after Miss Beaufort's outrageous sally last night to you, I should not wonder *at any indecorum* she might commit."

"*Outrageous* to me!" echoed the fop, dipping the

and of the netting into Diana's lavender bottle and dabbing his temples, "She was always too civil by half. I hate forward girls."

Thaddeus shut the large dictionary that lay before him, with a violence that made the puppy start; and rising hastily from his chair, with a face as red as crimson, was taking up his hat, when the door opened, and Mary appeared.

A white chip hat was resting lightly on the glittering tresses which waved over her forehead; whilst her lace shade, gently discomposed by the air, half veiled and half revealed her graceful figure. She entered with a smile, and walking up to the side of the table were Thaddeus was standing, inquired after his friend's health. He answered her in a voice unusually agitated. All that he had been told by the Countess of her favourable opinion of him; and the slander he had just heard from Diana's lover, were at once present to his mind.

He was yet speaking, when Miss Beaufort casually looking towards the other side of the room, saw her purse still acting the part of a handkerchief, in the hand of Mr. Lascelles.

"Look, Mr. Constantine," said she, gayly tapping his arm with her parasol, "how the most precious things may be degraded! There is the netting that you have so often admired, and which I intended for lady Tinemouth's pocket, debased to do the office of Mr. Lascelles's napkin."

"You gave it to him, Miss Beaufort," cried Miss Dundas; "and after that, surely he may use it as he values it!"

"If I could have given it to Mr. Lascelles, Madam, I should hardly have taken notice of its fate."

Miss Dundas, believing what her lover had advanced, was displeased at Mary, for having by presents, interfered with any of her danglers, and rather angrily replied, "Mr. Lascelles said you gave it to him; and certainly you would not insinuate a word against his veracity?"

"No, not *insinuate*," returned Miss Beaufort, "but *affirm*, that he has forgotten his veracity at least in this statement."

Lascelles yawned—"Lord bless me, ladies, how you *quarrel! You will* disturb Monsieur."

"Mr. Constantine," returned Mary, blushing with indignation, "cannot be disturbed by nonsense."

Thaddeus again took his hat: bowing to his lovely champion, with an expression of countenance, which he little suspected had passed from his heart to his eyes, he was preparing to take his leave, when Euphemia requested him to inform her whether she had folded down the right pages for the next exercise. He drew near, and was leaning over her chair to look at the book, when she whispered, "Don't be hurt at what Lascelles says; he is always jealous of any body who is handsomer than himself."

Thaddeus bowed to her with a face of scarlet; for, on meeting the eyes of Mary, he saw that she had heard this intended comforter as well as himself; and, uttering a few incoherent sentences to both ladies, he hurried out of the room.

CHAPTER VI.

The count Sobieski was prevented from paying his customary visit, next morning in Harley-street, by the sudden illness of the general, who, at seven o'clock, had been struck with a fit of the palsy.

When Dr. Cavendish beheld the poor old man stretched along the bed, and hardly exhibiting signs of life, he pronounced it to be a death-stroke. At this sentence, Thaddeus turning deadly pale, staggered to a seat, with his eyes fixed on the altered features of his friend. Dr. Cavendish took his hand.

"Recollect yourself, my dear sir! Happen when it will, his death must be a release. But do not expect it for some time; he may yet linger a week or a fortnight."

"Not in pain, I hope!" said Thaddeus, rising.

"No;" returned the doctor, "probably he will remain as you now see him, and expire like the last glimmer of a dying taper."

The benevolent Cavendish proceeded to give particular directions to Thaddeus, and Mrs. Robson, who promised to act as nurse; and then with regret left the stunned Count to the melancholy task of watching by the bed-side of his venerable friend.

Thaddeus now retained no thought that was not rivetted on the emaciated form before him. Whilst the unconscious invalid struggled for respiration, he listened to his short and convulsed breathing, with sensations which seemed to tear the strings of his own breast. Unable to bear it longer, he moved opposite to the fire, and seating himself, with his pallid face and aching head supported on his arm, which rested on a plain deal table, he remained, meeting no other suspension from deep meditation, than the now and then appearance of Mrs. Robson on tiptoes, peeping in, and inquiring whether he wanted any thing.

From this depressing reverie, he was aroused next morning at nine o'clock, by the entrance of Dr. Cavendish. Thaddeus seized his hand with the eagerness of anxiety,—"he has not been worse, my dear Sir, may I hope that———"

The doctor, not suffering him to finish with what he

hoped, shook his head, and waving his hand in sign of the vanity of that hope, advanced to the bed of the general, and felt his pulse. His opinion exactly coincided with what he had declared before, differing only in one particular, that he now saw no absolute threatenings of an immediate dissolution.

"Poor Butzou!" said Thaddeus, as the doctor withdrew, putting the general's motionless hand to his quivering lips, "I never will leave thee! I will watch by thee, thou last relic of my country!"

With anguish at his heart, he wrote a few hasty lines to the Countess: Then addressing Miss Dundas, he offered as the reason for his late and continued absence, the danger of his friend.

His note found Miss Dundas attended by her constant shadow Mr. Lascelles, lady Villiers, and two or three more fine ladies and gentlemen, besides Euphemia and Miss Beaufort, who, with pensive countenances, were waiting the arrival of its writer.

When Miss Dundas had taken the billet off the silver salver on which her man presented it, and had looked at the superscription, she threw it into the lap of Lascelles.

"There," cried she, "is an excuse, I suppose, from Mr. Constantine, for his impertinence in not coming here yesterday. Read it Lascelles."

"'Fore Gad, I would'nt touch it for an earldom!" exclaimed the affected puppy, jerking it on the table, "It might infect me with the hypochondriacs. Pray, Phemy, do you peruse it."

Euphemia in her eagerness to learn what had detained Mr. Constantine, neglected the insolence of the request, and, hastily breaking the seal, read as follows:

"Mr Constantine hopes that a sudden and dangerous disorder, which has attacked the life of a very dear friend with whom he resides, will be a sufficient appeal to the humanity of the Miss Dundas's, and obtain his pardon for relinquishing the honour of attending them yesterday and to-day."

"Dear me!" cried Euphemia, piteously, "how sorry I am! I dare say, it is that white-haired old gentleman we saw in the Park. You remember, Mary, he was sick?"

"Probably," returned Miss Beaufort, with her eyes fixed on the agitated hand-writing of Thaddeus.

"Throw the letter into the street, Phemy!" cried Miss Dundas, affecting sudden terror, "Who knows but what it is a fever the man has got, and we may all catch our deaths."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Mary, in a voice of real alarm: but it was for Thaddeus; not fear of any infection which the paper might bring to herself.

"Lascelles, take away the filthy scrawl from Phemy. How can you be so head-strong, child?" cried Diana, snatching the letter from her sister, and throwing it out of the window, "I declare you are sufficient to provoke a saint."

"Then, you may keep your temper, Di," returned Euphemia, with a sneer, "you are far enough from that title."

Miss Dundas made a very angry reply, which was retaliated with another; and a still more noisy and disagreeable altercation might have take place, had not a good humoured lad, a brother-in-law of Lady Villiers, in hopes of calling off the attention of the sisters, exclaimed, "Bless me, Miss Dundas, your little dog has pulled a folded sheet of paper from under that stand of flowers! Perhaps it may be of consequence!"

"Fly! Take it up, George!" cried Lady Villiers, "Esop will tear it to atoms whilst you are asking questions."

After a chace round the room, over chairs, and through tables, George Villiers at length plucked the devoted piece of paper out of the dog's mouth; and, as Miss Beaufort was gathering up her working materials, to leave the room, opened it, and cried, in a voice of triumph, "By Jove! It is a copy of verses!"

"Verses!" demanded Euphemia, feeling in her pocket, and colouring, "Let me see them."

"That you shan't roared Lascelles, catching them out of the boy's hand, "if they be your writing, we will have them."

"Help me, Mary!" cried Euphemia, turning to Miss Beaufort, "I know that nobody is a poet in this house, but myself. They must be mine, and I will have them."

"Surely, Mr. Lascelles," said Mary, compassionating the poor girl's anxiety, "you will not be so rude as to detain them from their right owner?"

"O! but I will," cried he, mounting on a table in

get out of Euphemia's reach, who now, half crying, tried to snatch at the paper. "Let me alone, Miss Phemy. I will read them; so here goes it."

Miss Dundas laughed at her sister's confused looks, whilst Lascelles prepared to read, in a loud voice, the following verses. They had been hastily scribbled in pencil by Thaddeus, a long time ago; who having put them by mistake, with some other papers, into his pocket, had dropped them next day, in taking out his handkerchief at lady Dundas's. Lascelles cleared his throat with three hems, then raising his right hand with a flourish of action, in a very pompous tone, began——

"Like one, whom Etna's torrent fires have sent
Far from the land, where his first youth was spent;
Who, inly drooping, on a foreign shore
Broods over scenes, which charm his eyes no more;
And while his country's ruin wakes the groan,
Yearns for the buried hut, he call'd his own.
So driv'n, O Poland! from thy ravag'd plains,
So mourning o'er thy sad, but lov'd remains,
A friendless wretch, I wander through the world,
From Fame, from Grandeur, and from Comfort hurl'd!
O! not, that each long night my weeping eyes
Sink into sleep, unlull'd by Pity's sighs;
Not, that in bitter tears my bread is steep'd;
Tears drawn by insult on my sorrows heap'd;
Not, that my thoughts recal a mother's grave;—
Recal the sire I would have died to save,
Who fell before me, bleeding on the field,
Whilst I in vain opposed the fruitless shield;—
Ah! not for these I grieve!—Tho' mental wo
More deadly still, scarce Fancy's self could know.
O'er want and private griefs the soul can climb,
Virtue subdues the one, the other Time;—
But, at his country's fall, the patriot feels
A grief, no time, no drug, no reason, heals.—
Mem'ry! remorseless murder! whose voice
Kills as it sounds; who never says, rejoice!
To my deserted heart, by joy forgot;
Thou pale, thou midnight spectre, haunt me not!
Thou dost but point to where sublimely stands
A glorious temple rear'd by Freedom's hands,
Circled with palms and laurels, crown'd with light,
Darting Truth's piercing sun on mortal sight;

Then, rushing on, leagued fiends of hellish birth,
Levelling the mighty fabric with the earth!
Slept the red bolt of Vengeance in that hour,
When virtuous Freedom fell the slave of Power!
Slumber'd the God of Justice! that no brand
Blasted, with blazing wing, the impious band.—
Dread God of Justice! to thy will I kneel,
Tho' still my filial heart must bleed and feel,
Tho' still the proud convulsive throb will rise,
When fools my country's wrongs and woes despise:
When low-soul'd Pomp, mean Wealth, that pity gives,
Which Virtue ne'er bestows, and ne'er receives,—
That pity, stabbing where it vaunts to cure,
Which barbs the dart of want, and makes it sure;—
How far remov'd from what the feeling breast,
Yields boastless, quench'd in sighs, to the distress'd!
Which whispers sympathy, with tender fear,
And almost dreads to pour its balmy tear.—
But such I know not now—unseen, alone,
I breathe the heavy sigh, I draw the groan;
And madd'ning, turn to days of liveliest joy,
When o'er my native hills I cast mine eye,
And said exulting,—"Free men here shall sow
"The seed, that soon in tossing gold shall glow!
"While Plenty, led by Liberty, shall rove
"Gay and rejoicing, through the land they love;
"And 'mid their loaded vines, the peasant see
"His wife, his children, breathing out—we're free!"
But now, O wretched land! above thy plains,
Half viewless thro' the gloom, vast Horror reigns.—
No happy peasant o'er his blazing hearth,
Devotes the supper-hour to love and mirth;
No flowers on Liberty's pure alter bloom,
Alas! they wither now, and strew her tomb!—
From the great book of Nations fiercely rent,
My country's page to Lethe's stream is sent—
O! sent in vain!—Th' historic muse shall raise,
O'er wrong'd Sarmatia's cause, the voice of praise,
Shall sing *her* nobly struggling, e'en in death;
But blast her royal robbers' bloody wreath*!"

"It must be Constantine's!" cried Euphemia in a

* These lines were furnished by a friend.

voice of surprised delight, when the reader had finished, and springing up to take the paper out of his hand.

"I dare say it is," answered the ill natured Lascelles, holding it above his head, "Come you shall have it, only first let us hear it again; it is so mighty pretty, so very lackadaisical!"

"Give it to me," cried Euphemia, quite angry.

"Don't, Lascelles," exclaimed Miss Dundas; "the man must be a perfect idiot to write such rhodomontade."

"O! It is delectable!" returned her lover, opening the paper again, "It would make a charming ditty! Come, I will sing it. Shall it be the tune of *The Babes in the Wood*, or *Chevy Chace*, or *The Beggar of Bethnal Green?*"

"Senseless, unfeeling wretch!" exclaimed Mary rising from her chair, where she had been striving to subdue those emotions, with which every line in the poem had possessed her heart.

"Brute!" cried the enraged Euphemia, taking courage at Miss Beaufort's unusual warmth, "I will have the paper."

"You shan't," answered the malicious coxcomb; and raising his arms higher than her reach, he tore it into a hundred pieces.

At this sight, Mary, no longer able to contain herself, rushed out of the room; and hurrying to her own chamber, threw herself upon the bed, where she gave way to a paroxysm of tears, that shook her almost to suffocation.

During the first burst of her indignation, her agitated spirit breathed every appellation of abhorrence and reproach, on Lascelles and his malignant mistress. Then, wiping her flowing eyes, she said, "Yet can I wonder, when I compare Constantine with what *they* are? The man who dares to be virtuous and great, and appear so, arms the self-love of all common characters against him."

Such being her meditations, she refused to join the family at dinner; and, it was not till evening, that she felt herself at all able to treat the ill-natured group with decent civility.

The next morning, Miss Beaufort (to avoid spending more hours than were absolutely necessary, in the company of a woman whom she now loathed) borrowed lady Dundas's sedan chair, and, ordering it to lady Tine-

mouth's, found her ladyship at home, alone, and evidently much agitated.

"I intrude on you, lady Tinemouth!" said Mary, observing her looks, and withdrawing from the offered seat.

"No, my dear Miss Beaufort," replied her ladyship, when the servant closed the door, "I am glad you are come. I assure you, I have few pleasures in solitude. Read that letter," added she, putting one into the hand of Mary, "it has just conveyed one of the cruelest stabs that ever was offered from a son to the heart of his mother. Read it; and you will not be surprised at finding me in the state you see."

The Countess looked on her paralysed hands as she spoke; and Mary, taking the paper from her, sat down, and read to herself the following letter.

"*To the Right Honourable the Countess of Tinemouth*

"Madam,

"I am commissioned by the Earl, my father, to inform you, that if you have lost all regard for your own character, he considers that some respect is due to the mother of his son; therefore, he watches your conduct.

"He has been apprised of your frequent meetings during these many months, in Grosvenor Place, and at other people's houses, with an obscure foreigner, your declared lover. The Earl wished to suppose this false, till your shameless behaviour became so flagrant, that he esteems it neither worthy of doubt nor indulgence.

"With his own eyes he saw you, four nights ago, alone with this man in Hyde-Park. Such demonstration is dreadful. Your proceedings are abominable; and, if you do not, without further parley, set off either to Craighall in Cornwall, or the Wolds, you shall receive a letter from my sister as well as myself, to tell the dishonoured lady Tinemouth, how much she merits her daughter's contempt, added to that of

HARWOLD."

"And what do you mean to do, my dear Madam?" inquired Mary, shocked at this instance of an ingratitude disgraceful to human nature.

"I will obey my Lord and his children," returned the Countess bursting into tears, "My last action shall be in obedience to their will. I cannot live long; and

when I am dead, perhaps the Earl's vigilance may be satisfied; perhaps, some kind friend may then plead my cause in my daughter's heart. One cruel line from her would kill me. I will at least avoid the completion of that threat, by leaving town to-morrow night."

"So soon! But I hope not to Cornwall?"

"No," replied her ladyship, "Craighall is too near Plymouth. I shall determine on the Wolds. Yet, why should I have a choice? It is almost a matter of indifference to what spot I am banished; in what place I am to die. Any where, I shall be equally remote from a friend."

Mary's heart was oppressed when she entered the room; lady Tinemouth's sorrows seemed to give her a licence to weep. She took her ladyship's hand, and with difficulty sobbed out this inarticulate offer, "Take me, dear lady Tinemouth! I am sure my guardian will be happy to permit me to be with you, where, and how long you like."

"Dear Mary," replied the Countess, kissing her wet cheek, "I thank you from my heart; but I cannot take so ungenerous an advantage of your goodness, as to consign your tender nature to the harrassing task of attending on sorrow and sickness. How strangely different may even amicable dispositions be tempered! Maria Egerton is better framed for such an office. Kind as she is, the hilarity of her disposition does not allow the sympathy she bestows on others, either to injure her mind or her body."

Mary interrupted her. "I should be grieved, my dear Countess, to believe, that my very aptitude to serve my friends, will prove the first reason why I should be denied that pleasure. It is only in scenes of affliction that friendship is tried and declares its truth. If Miss Egerton were not going with you, I should certainly insist on putting my affection to that ordeal."

"You mistake, my sweet friend," returned her ladyship, "Maria is forbidden to remain any longer with me. You have overlooked the postscript to lord Harwold's letter, else you must have seen the whole of my cruel situation. Turn over the leaf."

Miss Beaufort opened the sheet, and read these few lines, which being written on the interior part of the paper, had escaped her sight,

"Go where you will, it is our especial injunction that you leave a Miss Egerton behind you; whom we hear has been the ambassadress in this shocking intrigue. If we learn that you disobey, and persist in such audacity, it shall be worse for you in every respect; as it will convince us beyond a possibility of doubt, how uniform is the turpitude of your conduct."

Lady Tinemouth grasped Miss Beaufort's hand, as she threw the barbarous scrawl on the table. "And that, Mary, is from the son for whom I felt all a mother's agonies; all a mother's love! Had he died the first hour in which he saw the light, what a mass of guilt might he not have escaped! It is he," added she in a lower voice, and looking wildly round, "that breaks my heart. I could have born his father's perfidy; but, insult, oppression, from a child! Oh, Mary, you know not its bitterness!"

Mary could only answer with her tears.

After a pause of near a quarter of an hour, in which the Countess strove to tranquilize her spirits, she resumed in a more composed voice.

"Excuse me for an instant, my dear Miss Beaufort; I must write to Mr. Constantine. I have yet to inform him that my absence is to be added to his other misfortunes."

With her eyes raining down upon the paper, she took up a pen, and having hastily written a few lines, was sealing them, when Mary looking up, hardly conscious of the words which escaped her lips, said, with anguished eagerness, "Lady Tinemouth, you know much of that noble and unhappy young man?" Her eye irresolutely, and her cheek glowing, awaited the answer of the Countess who for a moment continued to gaze on the letter she held in her hand as if in profound thought; then all at once raising her head, and regarding the now down-cast face of Mary, with tenderness, replied in a tone which conveyed the deep interest of her heart.

"I do Mary. He has reposed his griefs in my friendship and honour, therefore, I must hold them sacred."

"I will not ask you to betray them," returned Mary in a faultering voice, "Yet, I cannot help lamenting his sufferings, and esteem the fortitude with which he supports his fall."

The Countess looked steadfastly on her fluctuating

countenance. "Has Constantine, my dear Miss Beaufort, insinuated to you, that he ever was otherwise than he now appears?"

Mary could not reply. She would not trust her lips with words, but shook her head in sign that he had not. Lady Tinemouth was too well read in the human heart to doubt for an instant, the cause of Miss Beaufort's question and consequent emotion. Feeling, that some, thing was due to anxiety so disinterested and noble, she took her passive hand, and said, "Mary you have guessed rightly. Though I am not authorised to tell you the real name of Constantine, nor the particulars of his history; let this satisfy your generous heart, that it can never be more honourably employed, than in compassionating calamities which ought to wreath his young brows with glory."

Mary's eyes streamed afresh, whilst her exulting soul seemed ready to rush from her bosom.

"Mary!" continued the Countess, warmed by the recollection of his excellence; "You have no need to blush at the interest which you take in this amiable Constantine! Every trial of spirit which could have tortured youth or manhood, has been endured by him with the firmness of a hero. Ah, my sweet friend" added the Countess, pressing the hand of the confused Mary, who, ashamed, and conscious that her behaviour betrayed how dearly she considered him, had covered her face with her handkerchief; "when you are disposed to believe that a man is as great as his titles and demands assert, examine with a nice observance, whether his pretensions be real or artificial. Imagine him disrobed of splendour and struggling with the world's inclemencies. If his character cannot stand this ordeal, he is only a pageant of pomp, inflated and garnished; and it is reasonable to punish his arrogance with contempt. But, on the reverse, when like Constantine, he rises from the ashes of his fortune in a brighter blaze of virtue; then, dearest girl," cried the Countess encircling her with her arms, "it is the sweetest privilege of loveliness, to console and bless so rare a being."

Mary raised her deluged face from the bosom of her friend; and, clasping her hands together with trepidation and anguish, implored her to be as faithful to her secret, as she had proved herself to Constantine's. "I

would sooner die," added the agitated Mary, "than have him know my rashness, perhaps my indelicacy! Let me possess his esteem, lady Tinemouth! Let him suppose, that I only *esteem* him! More, I should shrink from; I have seen him beset by some of my sex; and to be classed with *them!* To have him imagine that my affection is like *theirs!* I could not bear it—I entreat you, let him respect me!"

The impetuosity, and almost despair, with which Miss Beaufort uttered these incoherent sentences, pierced to the soul of lady Tinemouth. How different was the spirit of this pure and dignified love, to the wild passion, which she had seen shake the frame of lady Sara Roos!

They remained silent for some time.

"May I see your ladyship to-morrow?" asked Mary, drawing her cloak about her.

"I fear not;" replied the Countess, "I leave this house to-morrow."

Mary rose; her lips, hands, and feet trembled so, that she could hardly stand. Lady Tinemouth threw her arm round her waist, and kissing her forehead, said, "Heaven bless you, my dear Miss Beaufort! May all the wishes of your innocent heart be gratified!"

The Countess supported her to the door. Mary hesitated an instant, then flinging her snowy arms over her ladyship's neck, in a voice scarcely audible, articulated, "Only tell me! Does he love Euphemia?"

Lady Tinemouth strained her to her breast; "No, my dearest girl; I am certain, both from what I have heard him say, and observed in his eyes, that had he dared to love any one, *you* would have been the object of his choice."

How Mary got into lady Dundas's chair, she had no recollection, so completely was she absorbed in the recent scene. Her mind was perplexed, her heart ached; and she arrived in Harley-street so much disordered and unwell, as to oblige her to retire immediately to her room, with the excuse of a violent pain in her head.

This interview with Miss Beaufort, induced lady Tinemouth to destroy the note that she had written to Thaddeus, purposing before night, to frame another, *better calculated* to produce comfort to all parties. *What she declared* to Mary respecting the state of the *Count's affections*, was sincere.

She had early penetrated through the veil of bashfulness, with which Miss Beaufort had obscured that countenance, so usually the tablet of her soul. The Countess easily translated the quick receding of Mary's eye, whenever Thaddeus turned his attention towards her; the confused reply that followed any unexpected question from his lips; and above all, the unheeded sighs heaved by her, when he left the room, or when his name was mentioned during his absence. These symptoms too truly revealed to lady Tinemouth, the state of her young friend's bosom.

But the circumstances being different, her observations on the Count were not nearly so conclusive. Mary had absolutely given the empire of her happiness, with her heart, into his hands. Thaddeus wished, that his ruined hopes had not prevented him from laying his, at her feet. Therefore, not having surrendered his imagination to a passion, which, in his situation, he considered as madness, he was unembarrassed in her presence; and, regarding her as a being beyond his reach, conceived no suspicions, that she entertained one dearer thought of him than what mere philanthropy could authorise.

He contemplated her unequalled beauty, graces, talents, and virtues, with an admiration bordering on idolatry; yet his heart flew from the confession that he loved her: and it was not until reason demanded of his candour, why he had felt a pang on seeing Mary's purse in the hands of Mr. Lascelles, that with a glowing cheek, he owned to himself, he was jealous: that although he had not presumed to elevate one wish towards the possession of Miss Beaufort; yet, when Lascelles flaunted her name on his tongue, he found how poignant would be the wound in his peace, should she ever give her hand to another.

Confounded at this discovery of a passion, the seeds of which, he supposed had been crushed by the weight of his misfortunes, he proceeded homewards, with sensations not far differing from those of the dreamer, who sinks into a light but harrassing slumber, and, full of terror, doubts whether he be sleeping or awake.

The sudden illness of General Butzou having put these ideas to flight, Thaddeus was sitting on the be side, with his anxious thoughts fixed on the pale s

tacle of mortality before him, when Nancy brought in a letter from the Countess. He took it, and going to the window, undrew the curtain, where he read, with mingled pain and pleasure, the following epistle.

"*To Mr. Constantine.*

"I know not, my dear Count, when I shall be permitted to see you again; perhaps never on this side the grave!

"Since heaven has denied me the tenderness of my own children, it would have been a comfort to me, might I have continued to act a parent's part by you. But my cruel lord, and my more cruel son, jealous of the consolation I meet in the society of my few intimate friends, command me to quit London: and as I have ever made it a system to obey their injunctions strictly, I shall go.

"It pierces me to the soul, my *dear son!* (allow my maternal heart to call you by that name!) it distresses me deeply, that I am compelled to leave the place where *you* are: neither can I see you prior to my departure, for I quit town to-morrow afternoon.

"Write to me often, my loved Sobieski: your letters will be some alleviation during the fulfilment of my hard duty.

"Wear the enclosed gold chain for my sake; it is one of two given me a long time ago by Miss Beaufort. If I have not greatly mistaken you, the present will now possess a double value in your estimation: indeed it ought. Sensibility and thankfulness, being properties of your nature, they will not deny a lively gratitude to the generous interest with which that amiable young woman regards your fate. It is impossible, that the avowed count Sobieski (whom a year ago, I remember her animated fancy painted in the most romantic colours) could excite more of her esteem, than I know she has bestowed on the melancholy, the untitled Constantine.

"She is all nobleness and affection. Although I am sensible that she will leave much behind her in London to regret, she insists on accompanying me to the Wolds. Averse to transgress so far on her goodness, I resolutely *refused her offer,* till this evening, I received so warm

and urging a letter from the kind girl, that I can no longer withhold my consent.

"Indeed, this lovely creature's active friendship, proves of high consequence to me now, situated as I am with regard to a new whim of the Earl's. Had she not benevolently presented herself, in obedience to my lord's commands, I should have been obliged to go alone; he, having taken some wild antipathy to Miss Egerton, whose company he has interdicted. At any rate, her parents would not have allowed me her society much longer, as Mr. Montresor is to return this month.

"I shall not be easy, my dear Count, till I hear from you. Pray write soon; and inform me of every particular respecting the poor General: is he likely to recover?

"In all things, my *loved son*, in which I can serve you, remember, that I expect you will call on me *as a mother*. Your own could hardly have regarded you with deeper tenderness, than does your affectionate and faithful "ADELIZA TINEMOUTH.

"Grosvenor Place.

"Thursday, midnight.

"Direct to me, at Harwold-park, Wolds, Lincolnshire."

* * *

Several opposite emotions discomposed the mind of Thaddeus, whilst reading this epistle. Encreased abhorrence of the man, whom he believed to be incontestibly his father, united with regret arising from the proposed departure of lady Tinemouth, could neither subdue the balmy effect of her maternal affection, nor wholly check that thrill, which the unusual mentioning of Miss Beaufort's name, made throb in his heart, and paint his cheeks with crimson. He read the sentence that contained the assurances of her friendship, a third time.

"Delicious poison!" cried he, kissing the paper, "If adoring thee, lovely Mary, be added to my other sorrows, I shall be resigned! There is sweetness even in the thought. Could I credit all which my dear lady Tinemouth affirms, the conviction that I possess one *kind solicitude* in the mind of Miss Beaufort, would be *ample compensation* for—"

He did not finish the sentence, but sighing profoundly, *rose from* his chair.

"For any thing, except beholding her the wife of another!" was the sentiment with which his heart panted. Thaddeus had never known a selfish feeling in his life; and this first instance of his wishing that good unappropriated, which he might not himself enjoy, made him start.

"There is a fault in my heart, a dreadful one!" Dissatisfied with himself, he was preparing to answer her ladyship's letter, when, turning to the date, he discovered that it had been written on Thursday night; and, in consequence of Nancy's neglect, in not calling at the coffee-house, had been delayed a day and a half before it reached his hands.

His disappointment at this accident was severe. She was gone, and Mary along with her!

"Then indeed I am unfortunate!" said he, holding the chain in his hand, and looking on it; "I am at once deprived of all that rendered my forlorn existence in this town, tolerable!"

He put the chain round his neck; and, with a true lover-like feeling, thought that it warmed the heart, which mortification had chilled; but the fancy was evanescent, and he again turned to watch the fading life of his friend.

During the lapse of a few days, in which the General appeared merely to breathe; Thaddeus, instead of his attendance, dispatched regular notes to Harley-street. In answer to these excuses, he commonly received little tender billets from Euphemia; the strain of which he seemed totally to overlook, by the cold respect that he evinced in his diurnal apologies for absence.

This young lady was so full of lamentations over the trouble which her elegant tutor must endure in watching his sick friend, that she never thought it worth while to mention any creature in the house except herself and her commiserations. Thaddeus longed to inquire about Miss Beaufort; but the more he wished it, the greater reluctance he felt to write her name.

Things were in this situation, when one evening, as he was reading by the light of a solitary candle in his little sitting-room, the door opened, and Nancy stepped in, followed by a person wrapped up in a large black cloak. Thaddeus immediately rose.

"*A lady, Sir,*" said Nancy, curtsying.

The moment the girl withdrew, the visitor cast herself into a chair, and sobbing aloud, seemed in violent agitation. The Count, astonished and alarmed, approached her, and though she was unknown, offered her every assistance in his power.

Catching hold of the hand, which with the greatest respect he extended towards her, she instantly displayed to his dismayed sight, the features of lady Sara Roos.

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed he, involuntarily starting back.

"Do not cast me off, Constantine!" cried she, clasping his arm, and looking up to him, with a face of anguish, bathed in tears, "on you alone, I now depend for happiness! for existence!"

A cold damp stood on the forehead of her auditor. A tremor shook him from head to foot.

"Dear lady Sara, what am I to understand by this emotion? Has any thing dreadful happened? Is Captain Roos——?"

Lady Sara shuddered, and, still grasping his hand, answered in words, every one of which palsied the heart of Thaddeus with horror;—"He is coming home.—He is now at Portsmouth.—O Constantine! I am not yet so debased, as to live with him, when my heart is yours."

At this shameful declaration, Thaddeus clenched his teeth in fearful agony; and, striking his hand upon his closed eyes, to shut her from his sight, he turned suddenly round, and walked towards another part of the room.

Lady Sara followed him. Her cloak having fallen off, now displayed her fine form in all the fervour of grief and distraction; she wrung her snowy arms in despair; and, with accents rendered more piercing by the anguish of her mind, exclaimed, "What? You hate me? You throw me from you? Cruel, barbarous Constantine! Can you drive from your feet the woman who adores you? Can you cast her who is without a home into the streets?"

Thaddeus felt his hand wet with her tears; he fixed his eyes upon her with almost delirious horror. Her hat being off, gave a loose to her long black hair, which falling in masses over her shoulders and eyes, gave such additional wildness to the imploring and frantic expression of those eyes, as distracted his soul.

"Rise, Madam! For Heaven's sake, lady Sara!" and he stooped to support her up.

"Never," cried she, covering her face with her hands, "never! till you promise to protect me. My husband comes home to-night, and I have left his house for ever. You, you?" exclaimed she, extending her arms to his averted face, "O Constantine! you have robbed me of my peace! On your account I have flown from my home.—For mercy's sake, do not abandon me!"

"Lady Sara," cried he, looking wildly round him, "I cannot speak to you in this position! Rise, I implore you!"

"Only," returned she, "only say that you will protect me! That I shall find shelter here! Say this, and I will rise, and bless you for ever."

Thaddeus knew not what to reply. Distressed by her imprudence, terror-struck at the violent lengths to which she seemed determined to carry her unhappy and guilty passion, he in vain sought to evade this direct demand; for lady Sara, perceiving the reluctance and horror of his looks, sprang from her knees, and, in a more resolute voice, exclaimed, "Then, Sir, you will not protect me? You scorn and desert a woman, whom you well know has long loved you? Whom, by your artful behaviour, you have reduced to this disgrace!"

The Count, surprised and shocked at this accusation, with respectful gentleness, but resolution, denied the charge.

Lady Sara again melted into tears, and supporting her tottering frame against his shoulder, replied in a stifled voice, "I know it well. I have nothing to blame for my wretched state, but my own weakness. Pardon, dear Constantine, the dictates of my madness! Oh! I would gladly owe such misery to any other source than myself!"

"Then, dear lady Sara," rejoined Thaddeus, gaining courage from the mildness of her manner, "let me implore you to return to your own house!"

"Don't ask me," cried she grasping his hand; "O Constantine! if you knew what it was to receive with smiles of affection, a creature that you loath! you would shrink with disgust from what you require. I hate Captain *Roos*. Can I open my arms to meet him, when

my heart excludes him for ever? Can I welcome him home, when I wish him in his grave?"

The Count extricated his hand from her grasp. Her ladyship perceived the repugnance which dictated this action; and clasping her hands together, ejaculated, "Unhappy woman that I am! to hate, where I am loved! to love, where I am hated!—Kill me, Constantine!" cried she, turning suddenly towards him, and sinking down on a chair, "but do not give me such another look as that!"

"Dear lady Sara," replied he, seating himself by her side, "what would you have me do? You see that I have no proper means of protecting you. I have no mother, no sisters, no friends, to receive you. You see that I am a *poor* man. Besides, your character——"

"Talk not of my character!" cried she, "I will have none that does not depend on you!—Cruel Constantine! you will not understand me. I want no riches, no friends, but yourself, Give me *your* home, and *your* arms," added she, throwing herself in an agony on his bosom, "and beggary would be paradise!"

Thaddeus felt a dimness spread over his eyes. So much loveliness, such love, such disinterestedness, for a moment obliterated every other impression on his heart; but, recovering himself in an instant, he tore himself from her clinging arms, and staggering back a few paces, held her off with his hand, and, in a voice of distraction exclaimed, "Leave me, for pity's sake!"

"No, dearest Constantine!" cried she, aware of her advantage, and again casting herself at his feet, "Never, never, will I leave this spot, till you consent that your home shall be my home! That I shall serve you for ever!"

"All-powerful Heaven!" exclaimed Thaddeus, in an agony.

Lady Sara redoubled her tears and prayers.

"Seducing, dangerous woman!" cried he, looking at her with wild horror, "What is it you demand? Would you tear from me all that renders life bearable? Would you take from me a blameless conscience, and drive me to end my miserable days by a deed of desperation?"

Despair was in every feature of his countenance, as he uttered the last words, and flew from her, into the apartment where the General lay asleep. Lady Sara little expecting to see any one but the man she love

rushed in after him, and was again pressing to throw her imploring arms about her determined victim, when her eyes were suddenly arrested by a livid, and she thought, dead face of a person lying on the bed. Fixed to the spot, she stood for a moment, then putting her spread hand on her forehead, uttered a faint cry, and fell heart-struck and senseless on the floor.

Thaddeus, having instant conviction of her mistake, eagerly seized the moment of her insensibility to convey her home. He hastily went to the top of the stairs, called to Nancy to run for a coach, and then returning to the extended figure of lady Sara, lifted her in his arms, and carried her back to the room they had left.

By the help of hartshorn and water, he restored her to a sense of existence. She slowly opened her eyes; then raising her head, looked round her with a terrified air, when her eye falling on the still open door of the General's room, she caught Thaddeus by the arm, and said in a trembling voice, "Oh, take me from hence!"

Whilst she yet spoke, a coach stopped at the door. The Count rose, and attempted to support her agitated frame against his shoulders, but she trembled to such a degree, that he was obliged to throw his arm about her waist, and almost carry her down stairs.

When he had placed her ladyship in the carriage, she retained his hand, and said in a faint tone; "You surely will not leave me?"

Thaddeus returned no other answer, than desiring Nancy to sit by the General till she saw him again; and stepping into the coach, lady Sara immediately snatched his hand, and bathed it with her tears.

"Where are you going to take me?"

"You shall again, dear lady Sara," replied he, "return to a guiltless and peaceful home."

"I cannot meet my husband;" cried she, wringing her hands, "he will see all my premeditated guilt in my countenance. O! Constantine, have pity on me! Miserable creature that I am!" added she, redoubling her grief, "It is horrible to live without you! It is dreadful to live with him! Take me not home I intreat you."

The Count took her clasped hands in his.

"*Reflect for a moment, my dear lady Sara. I believe, if you love me, that it was in consequence of virtues which you thought I possessed.*"

"Indeed, you do me justice!" cried she.

He continued.

"Think then, should I yield to the influence of your beauty, and plunge you into a situation like that——" and he pointed to a group of unhappy women assembled at the corner of Pall-Mall. Lady Sara drew back with a thrill of horror; "Think, where would be, not only your innocence, but its price? I being no longer worthy of your esteem, you would hate me; you would hate yourself; and we should continue together, two guilty creatures, abhorring each other."

Lady Sara, drowned in tears, did not articulate any sounds but deep sighs, till the coach stopped in St. James's Place.

"Go in with me," were all the words which she could utter, as pulling her veil over her face, she gave him her hand to assist her down the step.

"Is Captain Roos arrived?" asked Thaddeus of a servant, who, to his great joy, returned a reply in the negative. During his ride, he had alarmed himself, by anticipating the disagreeable suspicions which might arise in the mind of the husband, should he see his wife in her present strange and distracted state.

When Thaddeus had seated lady Sara in her drawing room, he prepared to take a respectful leave; but her ladyship getting up, laid one hand on his arm, whilst with the other she covered her convulsed features; and said, "Constantine, before you go; before we part, perhaps eternally; Oh! tell me, that you do not hate me! That you do not *hate* me!" repeated she, in a firmer tone, "I know too well, how deeply I am despised."

"Cease, my dearest madam," returned he, tenderly replacing her on the sofa, "cease these vehement expressions. Shame does not depend on possessing passions, but on yielding to them. You have conquered, lady Sara; and in future, I shall respect and love you as a dear friend. Whoever holds the first place in my heart, you shall always retain the second.

"Noble! generous Constantine!" cried she, straining his hand to her lips, and bathing it with her tears; "I can require no more. May heaven bless you wherever you go!"

Thaddeus dropt upon his knee imprinted on both her *hands a compassionate* and fervent kiss; and rising hastily, *quitted the* room without a word.

CHAP. VIII.

The dream-like consternation which enveloped the Count's faculties, since the preceding scene, was dissipated next morning by the appearance of Dr. Cavendish. When he saw the general, he declared it to be his opinion, that in consequence of his long and tranquil slumbers, he should suppose some favourable crisis to be near; "probably" added he, "the recovery of his intellects: Such *phenomena* often in these cases, happen immediately before death."

"Heaven grant it!" ejaculated the Count; "to hear his venerable voice again acknowledge, that I have acted by him, as became the grandson of his friend; would be a comfort to me."

"But, Sir" said the kind physician, touching his burning hand, "you must not forget the cares which are due to your own life. If you wish well to the General, during the few days he may have to live, you are indispensably obliged to preserve your own strength. You are already ill, and require air. I have an hour of leisure" continued he, pulling out his watch, "I will remain here till you have taken two or three walks round the park. It is absolutely necessary; in this instance, I must take the privilege of friendship, and insist on obedience."

Thaddeus, seeing that the benevolence of the excellent Cavendish was resolute, took his hat, and with harrassed spirits, wallked down the lane to Charing-cross.

On entering Spring-garden gate, to his extreme surprise, the first objects which met his sight, were Miss Euphemia Dundas, and Miss Beaufort.

Euphemia accosted him immediately with ten thousand inquiries respecting his friend, besides congratulations on his own good looks.

Thaddeus bowed; then smiling faintly, turned to the blushing Mary; who, conscious of the recent conversation which had passed between herself and lady Tinemouth, trembled so much, that fearing to excite the suspicion of Miss E. Dundas by such tremor, she withdrew her arm, and walked forward alone, her feet tottering at every step.

"I thought, Miss Beaufort" said he, addressing himself to her, "that lady Tinemouth was to have had the happiness of your company to Harwold-park?"

"Yes," returned she, fearfully raising her eyes to his face; the hectic glow of which, conveyed differing sensations to her breast, from those that Euphemia had expressed; "but to my indescribable alarm and disappointment, the morning after I had written to fix my departure with her ladyship, my aunt's foot caught in the iron of the stair-carpet as she was coming down stairs, and, throwing her from the top to the bottom, broke her leg. I could not quit her a moment during her first agonies; and the surgeons expressing their fears that a fever might ensue, I was obliged altogether to decline my attendance on the Countess!"

"And how is Miss Dorothy Somerset?" inquired Thaddeus, truly concerned at the accident.

"She is better, though confined to her bed;" replied Euphemia, speaking before her companion could open her lips; "and indeed, poor Mary and myself have been such close nurses, that my mother insisted on our walking out to-day."

"And lady Tinemouth;" returned Thaddeus, again addressing Mary, "of course she went alone?"

"Alas, yes!" replied Mary, "Miss Egerton was forced to join her family in Leicestershire."

"I believe," cried Euphemia, sighing, "that Miss Egerton is going to be married immediately. It has been a long attachment. Happy girl! I have heard Captain Roos, whose Lieutenant he was, say that he is the finest young man in the Navy. Did you ever see Mr. Montresor?" added she, turning her pretty eyes on the Count.

"I never had that honour."

"Bless me! that is odd, considering your intimacy with Miss Egerton. I assure you he is very charming."

Thaddeus neither heard this, nor a great deal more of the same trifling chit-chat which was slipping from the tongue of Miss Euphemia; so intently were his eyes (sent by his heart) searching the downcast, but expressive countenance of Miss Beaufort. Her soul was full, and the fluctuations of her colour, with the embarrassment of her step, interested and affected him.

"Then you do not leave town for some time, Miss

Beaufort?" inquired he, "I may yet anticipate the honour of seeing——" he hesitated a moment, then added in a depressed tone—"your aunt, when I next wait on the Miss Dundas's."

"Our stay entirely depends on her health;" returned she, striving to rally herself; "and I am sure she will be equally happy to see you better; for, I am sorry to say, that I cannot agree with Euphemia, in thinking that you look well."

"Merely a slight fever," replied he; "the effect of an anxiety and watching, which I fear will too soon cease, in the death of their cause. I came out now for a little air only, whilst the physician remains with my friend."

"Poor old gentleman!" sighed Mary, "how venerable was his appearance that morning in which we saw him in the Park! What a benign countenance!"

"His countenance," replied Thaddeus, his eyes turning mournfully towards the lovely speaker, "is the emblem of his character. He was the most amiable of men."

"And you are likely to lose so interesting a friend? dear Mr. Constantine, how I pity you!" As Euphemia uttered these words, she put the corner of her glove to her eye.

The Count looked at her, and, perceiving that her commisseration was affectation, he turned to Miss Beaufort, who was walking pensively by his side, and made further inquiries respecting Miss Dorothy. Solicitous to get back to St. Martin's Lane, he was preparing to quit them, when Mary, as with a full heart she curtsied her adieu, at last, in a hurrying and confused manner, said, "Pray, Mr. Constantine, take care of yourself. You have other friends besides the one you are going to lose. I know lady Tinemouth, I know my aunt—" she stopped short, and covered with blushes, stood panting for another word to close the sentence; when Thaddeus, forgetting the presence of Euphemia, with delighted precipitancy caught hold of the hand which in the energy of speaking was a little extended towards him, and, pressing it with fervour, relinquished it immediately: overcome by confusion at the presumption of the action, he bowed with agitation to both ladies and hastened through the Priory passage, into St. James's-street.

"Miss Beaufort!" cried Euphemia, reddening with vexation, and returning a perfumed handkerchief to her pocket; "I did not understand that you and Mr. Constantine were on such intimate terms!"

"What do you mean, Euphemia?"

"That you have betrayed the confidence which I reposed in you;" cried the angry beauty, wiping away the really starting tears with her white lace cloak; "I told you that the elegant Constantine was the lord of my heart, and you have seduced him from me! Till you came, he was so respectful, so tender, so devoted!—But I am rightly used! I ought to have carried my secret to the grave."

In vain Miss Beaufort protested; in vain she declared herself ignorant of possessing any power, over even one wish of Constantine. Euphemia thought it monstrous pretty to be the injured friend and forsaken mistress; and all along the Park, and up Constitution Hill, until they arrived at lady Dundas's carriage, which was waiting opposite Devonshire Wall, she affected to weep. When seated, she continued her invectives: She called Miss Beaufort, ungenerous, perfidious, traitor to friendship; and every romantic and disloyal name, which her inflamed fancy could devise, till the sight of Harley-street, checked her transports, and relieved Miss Beaufort from a load of impertinence and abuse.

During this short interview, Thaddeus received an impulse to his feelings, which hurried them forward with an impetuous rapidity, that neither time nor succeeding sorrows could stop or stem.

Mary's heavenly beaming eyes seemed to have encircled his head with love's brightest lustre.—The command, "Preserve yourself for others besides your dying friend," yet throbbed at his heart: with ten thousand rapturous visions dancing before his sight, he felt treading in air, till the humble door of his melancholy home presenting itself, at once wrecked the illusion, and offered sad reality, in the person of his emaciated friend.

On the Count's entrance into the sick chamber, Doctor Cavendish gave him a few directions to pursue, when the General should awake from a sleep in which he had been sunk since the preceding night; and Thaddeus, *with a heart* still more depressed, from the late unusual *exaltation of* his feelings, sat down on the bed for the *remainder of the* day.

At five in the afternoon, General Butzou awoke; seeing the Count, he stretched our his withered hand, and as the Doctor had predicted, accosted him rationally.

"Come, dear Sobieski! Come nearer, my dear master!"

Thaddeus rose, and throwing himself on his knees, took the offered hand with apparent composure: It was a hard struggle to restrain the emotions which were roused by this awful contemplation;—the return of reason to the soul, on the instant she was summoned into the presence of her Maker!

"My kind, my beloved Lord!" added Butzou, "to me, you have indeed performed a christian's part; you have clothed, sheltered, and preserved me in your bosom. Blessed son of my most honoured master!"

The good old man put the hand of Thaddeus to his lips. Thaddeus could not speak.

"I am going, dear Sobieski, continued the General in a lower voice, "where I shall meet your noble grandfather, your mother, and my brave countrymen: and if heaven grants me power, I will tell them by whose labour I have lived, on whose breast I have expired."

Thaddeus could no longer retain his tears.

"Dear, dear General!" exclaimed he, grasping his hand; "my grandfather, my mother, my country! I lose them again in thee!—Oh! would the same summons take *me* hence!"

"Hush!" returned the dying man, "Heaven reserves you, my honoured lord, for wise purposes. Youth and health are the marks of commission: *You* possess them, with virtues, which will bear you through the contest. I have done; and my merciful Judge, has evinced his pardon of my errors, by sparing me in my old age, and leading me to die with you."

Thaddeus pressed his friend's hand to his streaming eyes, and promised to be resigned. Butzou smiled upon him his satisfaction; then, closing his eye-lids, he composed himself to a rest, that was neither sleep nor stupor, but a balmy serenity, which seemed to be tempering his late recovered soul, for its immediate entrance on a world of eternal peace.

At nine o'clock, his breath became broken with quick sighs. The Count's heart trembled, and he drew closer to the pillow. Butzou felt him, and opening his eyes

languidly, hardly articulated (though not a sound escaped the ear of his friend) "Raise my head."

Thaddeus put his arm under his neck, and lifting him up, reclined him against his bosom. Butzou squeezed his hands and looking gratefully in his face, said, "The arms of a soldier, should be a soldier's bed. I am content.

He lay for a moment on the breast of the almost fainting Thaddeus; then suddenly quitting his grasp, he cried, "I lose you Sobieski?"

"I am here," exclaimed the Count, catching his motionless hand. The dying General murmured a few words of blessing; and, turning his face inwards, breathed his last sigh on the heart of his last friend.

For a minute, Sobieski remained incapable of thought or action. When he recovered recollection, he withdrew from his melancholy station, and, laying the venerable remains of the General on the bed, did not trust his rallied faculties with a second trial, but, hastening down stairs, was met by Mrs Robson.

"My dear Madam," said he, "all is over with my poor friend. Will you do me the everlasting kindness, to perform those duties to his sacred relics, which I cannot?"

Mrs. Robson, with tears, and expressions of gratitude, for his goodness, when she was in a similar distress, sent to request the assistance of the charitable neighbour who had succoured her in the case of her lamented little William; and together, they arranged and ordered every thing that was requisite.

Thaddeus would not allow any person to watch by his friend's coffin besides himself. The meditations of this solitary night, presented to his sound and feeling mind, every argument, rather to induce rejoicing than regret, that the eventful life of the brave Butzou had terminated.

"Yes, illustrious old man!" cried he, gazing on his marbled features. "If valour and virtue be the true sources of nobility, thou surely wert noble! Inestimable defender of Stanislaus and thy country! thou hast run a long and bright career; and though thou art fated to rest in the humble grave of poverty, it will be embalmed by the tears of heaven; it will be engraven on my heart."

Thaddeus did not weep whilst he spoke. Nor did he

weep, when he beheld the mould of St. Martin's church yard close from his view the last dwelling of his friend. It began to rain. Doctor Cavendish, putting his arm through the Count's tried to pull him away, but he lingered a moment, and, looking on the dust as the sexton piled it up, "Wretched Poland!" sighed he, "how far from thee, lies one of thy bravest sons!"

Doctor Cavendish regarded him with pity and admiration; but he vainly attempted to persuade him to return with him to dinner: Thaddeus refused the kind invitation; alleging, with a faint smile, that under every misfortune, he found his best comforter to be solitude.

Doctor Cavendish, respecting the resignation and manliness of this answer, urged him no further; but expressed his regret that they could not meet again till the end of the week, he being obliged to hurry down to Stamford next day, on a medical consultation of considerable moment: and shaking hands with his thoughtful friend at the door of Mrs. Robson, they parted.

CHAPTER IX.

NEXT morning, when the Count Sobieski unfolded the several packets of papers which were put into his hands by little Nancy, who brought his breakfast, he laid them, one after the other, on the table, and, sighing heavily, said to himself, "Now comes the bitterness of poverty! Heaven only knows by what means I shall defray these terrific charges!"

The mere personal privations induced by his fallen fortunes, excited few uneasy sensations in the mind of Thaddeus. As he had derived no peculiar gratification from the enjoyment of a magnificent house, splendid table, and numerous attendants; he had felt equal content in the field, where he was often forced to sleep on the bare ground, and snatch his hasty meal at uncertain intervals. Watching, rough fare, and other hardships, were dust in the path of honour; he had dashed through them with light and buoyant spirits: and he repined as little, at the actual wants of his forlorn state in exile; till, compelled by friendship to contract demands that he could not defray, he was plunged at once into the full horrors of poverty and debt.

He looked at the amount of the bills. The apothecary's was fifteen pounds; the funeral, twenty more. Thaddeus turned pale. The value of all he possessed, would not produce one half of the sum; besides, he owed five guineas to his good landlady, for numerous little comforts appropriated to his deceased friend.

"Whatever be the consequence," cried he, "that excellent woman shall not suffer by her humanity! If I have to part with the last memorial of them who were so dear, she shall be repaid."

He had scarcely ceased speaking, when Nancy re-entered the room with a saddened countenance, and told him, that the apothecary's young man, and the undertaker, were both below, waiting for answers to their letters. The Count, reddening with disgust at the unfeeling avidity of these men, desired Nancy to say, that he could not see either of them to-day, but would send to their houses to-morrow.

In consequence of this promise, the men made their

bows to Mrs. Robson (who too well guessed the reason of this message) and took their leaves.

When Thaddeus put the picture of his mother, and the Palatine, with other trinkets, into his pocket, he could not forbear feeling something like indignation against the thoughtless meanness of the Miss Dundasses; who, since his entrance into their house, had never offered any farther liquidation of the large sum which they now stood indebted to him, than the trifling note which had been transmitted prior to his attendance, through the hands of lady Tinemouth.

Whilst his necessities reproached them for this illiberal conduct, his proud heart recoiled at making a request to their charity; for he gathered from the haughty demeanour of Miss Diana, that what he was entitled to demand, would be given not as a just remuneration for labour received, but as alms of humanity to an indigent emigrant.

"I would rather perish," cried he, putting on his hat, "than ask that woman for a shilling."

When the Count laid his treasure on the table of he considerate pawnbroker, he desired to have the value of the settings, and the pictures put into leather cases. Mr. Burnet having examined the gold of the miniatures, with the other trinkets, declared on the word of an honest man, that he could not give more than fifteen pounds.

With difficulty, Thaddeus stifled as torturing a sigh as ever distended his breast, whilst he said,

"I will take it. I only implore you to be careful of the things! trifling as they are, circumstances with which they were connected, render them valuable to me."

"You may depend on me, Sir," replied the pawnbroker, presenting him the notes and acknowledgment.

When Thaddeus took them, Mr. Burnet's eye was caught by the ring which he wore on his finger.

"That ring seems curious! If you won't consider it impertinent, may I ask to look at it?"

The Count immediately pulled it off, and forcing a smile, replied, "I suppose it is of little intrinsic value. The setting is antique, but the painting is fine,"

Burnet breathed on the diamonds. "If you were to *sell it," returned* he, I don't think it would fetch more than *three* guineas. The diamonds are damaged, and

the emeralds would be of little use, being out of fashion here; as for the miniature, it goes for nothing."

"Of course," said Thaddeus, putting it on again; "but I shall never part with it." Whilst he drew on his glove, Mr. Burnet asked him, whether the head were not intended for the king of Poland.

The Count, surprised, answered in the affirmative.

"I thought so," answered the man; "it is very like two or three prints which I had in my shop of that king. Indeed I believe I have them somewhere now: these matters are but a nine days wonder, and the sale is ever."

His auditor did not clearly comprehend him, and he told him so.

"I meant nothing," continued he, "to the disparagement of the King of Poland; or of any other great personage, who is much the subject of conversation. I only intended to say, that every thing has its fashion. The ruin of Poland was the fashionable topic for a month after it happened; and now nobody minds it; it is extinct, it is forgotten."

Thaddeus, who felt he had all its miseries written in his bosom, with a clouded brow, bowed to the remarks of Mr. Burnet, and in silence quitted the shop.

Mrs. Robson was standing with a man in the passage, when he arrived at home. Thaddeus saw that the good woman had been weeping; and, from the angry countenance of her companion, easily divined the occasion of the debate. He asked Nancy, whom he found in the kitchen, what was the matter.

"Nothing, Sir," said she, "but Mr. White, the baker: he has been twice this week to my grandmother, for four pounds which she owes him, and I know she cannot pay him yet."

"Call her in," returned the Count, glad that he at least possessed the power, by discharging his debt to her, to relieve so much worth from embarrassment.

Whilst Mrs. Robson obeyed the summons of her beloved lodger, he distinctly heard the incorrigible baker cry after her, "Remember, mistress, I will not leave this spot till I am paid."

"Here, my good Mrs. Robson," said Thaddeus, smiling kindly, and putting five guineas into her hand, "here is the money that you have expended for my poor friend; my gratitude will ever be your due."

Mrs. Robson received the gold with a low curtsey, and hastened out of the room, elated with honest triumph, at the opportunity of so immediately satisfying the rapacity of her creditor.

Thaddeus, having entered his own room, laid the remainder of his money on the bills of the two claimants. It was unequal to the demands of either; yet, in some measure, to be just to both, he determined on dividing it between them; and to promise the liquidation of the rest by degrees.

Surely he might hope, that even should the Miss Dundasses entirely forget his claims on them, his labour could in the course of time, make drawings, sufficient to cover the residue of the debt! But he was not permitted to put this calculation to the trial.

When he called on the apothecary, and offered him five guineas, the man refused it with insolence, insisting on the whole. Unused to the language of compulsion and vulgarity, the Count quitted the shop, telling the man that he was at liberty to act as he thought fit; and, with no very serene countenance, he entered the undertaker's warehouse.—This man was civil: to him, Thaddeus gave the sum, half of which the apothecary had rejected with so much derision. The politeness of the undertaker, a little calmed the irritated temper of the Count; who returned home, pondering on the vile nature of that part of mankind, which can with indifference heap insult on distress.

Judging men by his own disposition, he had seldom given credence to the possibility of such conduct. He had been told of dastardly spirits; but never having seen them, and possessing no prototype within his own breast of what he heard, the repeated relation passed over his mind without leaving an impression. He had sprung into the world, filled with animating hopes of virtue and renown. He was virtuous; he became powerful, great and renowned. Creation seemed paradise to his eyes. It was the task of adversity, to teach him a different lesson of mankind. Not less virtuous, not less great, his fortunes fell, he became poor; the perfidy, the hard-heartedness of man, made, and kept him friendless. When he wanted succour and consolation, he *found the world* peopled by a race too mean, even to *bear the stamp* of the devil.

Whilst Sobieski was employed next morning at his drawing, Mrs. Robson sent Nancy to say, that there were two strange looking men below, who wanted to speak with him. Not doubting their being messengers from the apothecary, he desired that they might come up stairs. When they entered his room, the Count, with the politeness spontaneous to his ever wakeful benevolence, rose. One of the men stepped forward, and, laying a slip of paper on the table, said, "I arrest you, Sir, at the suit of Mr. Jackson, the apothecary."

Thaddeus felt his cheek flush; but suppressing every indignant emotion, he calmly asked the men where they were going to take him?

"If you like," replied one of them, "you may be well enough lodged. I never heard a word against Clement's in Wych-street."

"Is that a prison?" inquired Thaddeus.

"No, not exactly that, sir;" answered the other man, laughing; "You seem to know little of the matter, which for a Frenchman is odd enough! But mayhap you have never a *lock-up-house* there? *Howsomever*, if you pay well, Mr. Clements will give you lodgings as long as you like. It is only *poor* rogues, who are *obligated* to go to Newgate; such *gemmen* as you, can live as *genteelly* in Wych-street as at their own houses."

There was such an air of derision about this fellow as he spoke and glanced round the room, that Thaddeus, sternly contracting his brows, disdained to take no farther notice of him; but, turning to his more civil companion, said:

"Has this person informed me rightly? Am I going to a prison, or am I not? If I do not possess money to pay Mr. Jackson, I can have none to spend elsewhere."

"Then, you must go to Newgate;" answered the man, in as surly a tone as his comrade's had been insolent.

"I'll run for a coach, Wilson," cried the other, opening the room door.

"I will not pay for one," said Thaddeus, at once comprehending the sort of wretches into whose custody he had fallen; "follow me down stairs. I shall walk."

Mrs. Robson was in her shop as he passed to the *street*. She called out, "you will come home to dinner Sir?"

"No," replied he; "but you shall hear from me before night."

The men, winking at each other, sullenly pursued his steps down the lane. In the Strand, Thaddeus asked them which way he was to proceed.

"Straight on," cried one of them; "most folks find the road to a jail easy enough."

Involved in thought, the Count walked forward, unmindful of the stare which the well-known occupation of his attendants attracted towards him. When he arrived at Somerset-house, one of the men stepped up to him, and said, "We are now nearly opposite Wych-street. You had better take your mind again, and go there instead of Newgate. I don't much think you will like the debtor's hole."

Thaddeus, coldly thanking him, repeated his determination to be led to Newgate. But when he beheld the immense walls, within which he believed he should be immured for life, his feet seemed rooted to the ground: and when the massy gates were opened, and closed upon him, he felt as if suddenly deprived of the vital spring of existence. A mist spread over his eyes, his soul shuddered, and with difficulty he followed the men into the place where his commitment was to be ratified. Here, all the proud feelings, of his nature again rallied themselves round his heart.

The brutal questions of the people in office, re-echoed by the taunts from the wretches who had brought him to the prison, were of a complexion so much beneath his answering, that he stood perfectly silent during the business; and when dismissed, without evincing any signs of discomposure, followed the turnkey to his cell.

One deal chair, a table, and a miserable bed, were all the furniture it contained. The floor was paved with flags; and the sides of the apartment daubed with discoloured plaster, part of which having been peeled off by the damp, exposed to view large spaces of the naked stones.

Before the turnkey withdrew, he asked Thaddeus whether he wanted any thing?

"Only a pen, ink, and paper."

The man held out his hand.

"*I have no money*," replied Sobieski.

"*Then you get nothing here*," answered the fellow, *pulling the door after him.*

Thaddeus threw himself on the chair, and in the bitterness of the moment, exclaimed, "Can these scoundrels be Christians? Can they be men?" He cast his eyes round him with the wildness of despair: "Allpowerful Heaven! Can it be possible, that for a few guineas, I am to be confined in this place during life? In these narrow bounds, am I to waste my youth, my existence? Even so; I cannot, I will not, degrade the spirit of Poland, by imploring assistance from any native of a land, in which avarice has choaked the feelings of humanity."

By the next morning, the first paroxysm of indignation having subsided, Thaddeus entertained a cooler and more reasonable opinion of his situation.

He considered, that though he was a prisoner, it was in consequence of debts incurred in behalf of a friend, whose latter hours were rendered less wretched by such means. Feeling, that notwithstanding '*all that man could do unto him*,' he had brought an approving conscience, to heighten the glooms of a dungeon, he resumed his wonted serenity, and continued to distance the impertinent freedom of his gaolers, by a stern dignity, which extorted civility, and commanded their respect:

CHAPTER X.

Several days elapsed, without the inhabitants of Harley-street hearing any tidings of Thaddeus.

Miss Dundas never bestowed a thought on his absence, except when descanting on her favourite subject, the insolence of dependant people, she alleged, his daring to withdraw himself, as an instance.—Miss Euphemia uttered all her complaints to Miss Beaufort; whom she accused, of not being satisfied with seducing the affections of Mr. Constantine, but she must also spirit him away, lest by remorse, he should be induced to renew his former devotion at the shrine of her tried constancy.

Mary found these secret conferences, very frequent and very teizing. She neither believed the Count's past devoirs to Euphemia, nor his present allegiance to herself. With unquiet feelings, she watched the slow decline of every succeeding day, hoping, that each knock at the door, would either present himself, or an apology for his absence.

In vain her reason urged the weakness and folly of giving way to the influence of a passion as violent as it was unforeseen. "It is not his personal graces;" murmured she, whilst her dewy eyes remained riveted on the floor; "it is not them; they have not accomplished this effect on me! No; matchless as he is; though his countenance expresses godlike beauty, when illumined by the rare splendours of genius; yet, my heart tells me, I would rather see all that perfection demolished, than lose one beam of those bright charities which first attracted my esteem. Yes, Constantine!" cried she, rising in agitation; "I could adore thy virtues, were they even in the bosom of deformity. It is them, that I love; it is them, that are thyself! It is thy noble, god-like soul, that so entirely fills my heart; and will, for ever!"

She recalled the hours, which in his society had glided so swiftly by, to pass in review before her. They came, and her tears redoubled. Neither his words, nor his looks, had been kinder to her, than to Miss Egerton or lady Sara Roos. She remembered his wild action in

the Park: it had transported her at the moment; it even now made her heart throb; but she ceased to believe it intended more than an animated expression of gratitude.

An adverse feeling seemed to have taken possession of her breast. In proportion to the vehemence of Miss Euphemia's reproaches (who insisted on the passion of Thaddeus) she the more doubted the evidence of those delightful emotions which had rushed over her soul, when she found her hand so fervently pressed in his.

Euphemia never made a secret of the *tendresse* she professed: and Miss Beaufort having been taught by her own heart, to read distinctly, the eyes of lady Sara; the result of her observations, had long acted as a caustic on her peace: it robbed her cheeks of their bloom, and compelled her to number the lingering minutes of the night with sighs. But her deep and modest flame assumed no violence; retreated far from sight, it burnt the more intensely.

Instead of over-valuing the fine person of Thaddeus, the encomiums which it exacted from even the lips of prejudice, occasioned one source of her pain. She could not bear to think it probable, that the man whom she believed and knew to be gifted with every attribute of goodness and heroism; might one day be induced to sacrifice the rich treasure of his mind, to a creature, who would select him from the rest, merely on account of his present superiority.

Such was the train of Mary's meditations, when covering her face with her handkerchief, she exclaimed in a hurried and perturbed voice, "Ah! Why did I leave my quiet home, to expose myself to the vicissitudes of society? sequestered from the world, neither its pageants nor its mortifications could have reached me there. I have seen thee, matchless Constantine! Like a bright star, thou hast passed before my eyes! like a being of a superior order! And, I never, never can debase my nature, to love another. Thy image shall follow me into solitude; shall consecrate my soul, to the practice of every virtue! I will emulate thy excellence, when, perhaps, thou hast forgotten that I exist."

The fit of despondence, which threatened to succeed this last abrupt reflection, was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Euphemia. Miss Beaufort hastily rose, and drew her ringlets over her eyes.

"O, Mary," cried the little beauty, holding up her pretty hands, "What do you think has happened?"

"What?" demanded she in alarm, and hastening towards the door, "any thing to my aunt?"

"No, no: answered Euphemia, catching her by the arm; "but could my injured heart feel satisfaction in revenge, I should now be happy. Punishment has overtaken the faithless Constantine."

Mary looked aghast; and, grasping the back of a chair to prevent herself from falling, breathlessly inquired what she meant?

"Oh! He is sent to prison! cried Euphemia, not regarding the real agitation of her auditor (so entirely was she occupied in appearing overwhelmed with distress herself) and wringing her hands, she continued in a whimpering voice; "that frightful wretch, Mr. Lascelles, is just come in to dinner. You cannot think, with what devilish glee he told me, that about a week ago, as he was driving out of town, he saw Mr. Constantine with two bailiffs behind him, walking down Fleet-street! And besides, I verily believe, he said, that he had irons on."

"Father of Heaven!" ejaculated Mary with a cry of terror, at this *ad limitum* addition of Euphemia's, "What can he have done?"

"Bless my soul, Mary!" returned Euphemia, staring at her, as she sat pale and trembling in a chair; "Why, what frightens you so! Does not every body run in debt, without minding it?"

Miss Beaufort shook her head; and, looking distractedly about her, put her hand to her forehead. Euphemia, now quite alarmed, forced her to drink some water; and, whilst the horror-struck Mary, with ten thousand vague and hideous fancies racking her heart, leaned against the wall; the little beauty, unconscious what part of her narrative occasioned these emotions, thought to obliterate what she had said, by saying more; and determining not to be out done in '*tender wo*," drew forth her handkerchief, and putting it to her eyes, resumed in a piteous tone:

"I am sure, I shall hate Lascelles all my life, because he did not stop the men, and inquire what jail they were taking him to! You know, Mary, you and I might have visited him. It would have been delightful to have

consoled his sad hours! We might have planned his escape."

"In irons!" ejaculated Mary, raising her tearless eye to heaven.

Euphemia coloured at the agonized manner in which these words were reiterated, and rather confusedly replied, "Not absolutely in irons. You know that is a metaphorical term for captivity."

"Then, he was not in irons?" cried Miss Beaufort, seizing her hand eagerly, "Tell me, for heaven's sake, tell me, he was not in irons?"

"Why then," returned Euphemia, half angry at being obliged to contradict herself; "if you are such a fool, that you cannot understand poetical language, I must tell you, he was not."

Mary heard no further; but even at the moment when a bright glow overspread her countenance, fell senseless back into the chair.

Euphemia flew immediately to the top of the stairs, and shrieking violently, stood wringing her hands, till Diana and lady Dundas, followed by several gentlemen, hastened out of the saloon, and demanded what was the matter? As soon as Euphemia had pointed to Mary's dressing-room door, she staggered, and sinking into the arms of lord Elesmere fell into the most outrageous hysterics. The Marquis, who had just dropt in, on his return from St. James's became so possessed with dread of the agitated lady's tearing his point-lace ruffles, that in almost as trembling a state as herself, he gladly shuffled her into the hands of her maid; and, scampering down stairs as if all bedlam were at his heels, sprung into his *vis-a-vis*, and drove off like lightning.

When Miss Beaufort opened her eyes, at the sight of such a crowd she had nearly relapsed; but, trying to repel her confusion, she rose, and supporting herself on the arm of Miss Dorothy's maid, thanked the company for their attention, and desired to be assisted to her chamber.

Meanwhile, Euphemia, who had been carried down into the saloon, thought it time to raise her lily hand, and utter a few incoherent words: the instant they were *breathed*, Miss Dundas and Mr. Lascelles, in one voice, *demanded* what was the matter?

"*Has* not Mary told you?" returned her sister, *languidly* opening her eyes.

"No," answered Lascelles, rubbing his hands, with delighted curiosity; "Come, let us have it?"

Euphemia, pleased at this, and loving mystery with all her heart, waved her hand solemnly; and in an awful tone replied, "Then, it passes not *my* lips."

"What, Phemy!" cried he, "you want us to believe that you have seen a ghost? But you forget, they don't walk at mid day."

"Believe what you like," returned she, with an air of consequential contempt; "I am satisfied to keep the secret."

Miss Dundas burst into a provoking laugh; and calling her the most incorrible little idiot she had ever seen, encouraged Lascelles to join in the ridicule. Determining to gratify his spleen, if he could not satisfy his curiosity, this witless coxcomb continued the whole day in Harley-street, for the mere pleasure of tormenting Euphemia. From the dinner hour until twelve at night, neither his drowsy fancy, nor wakeful malice, could find one other weapon of assault, than the stale jokes attending *mysterious chambers, lovers incognito;* or the silly addition of two Cupid-struck sweeps, hopping down the chimney, to pay their addresses to the fair friends. Diana talked of Jupiter with his thunder; and, patting her sister under the chin, added, "I cannot doubt that Mary is the favoured Semele: But, my dear, you have overacted your character! As confidant, a few tears were enough when your lady fainted." During these attacks, Euphemia reclined pompously on a sofa, and not deigning a reply, repelled them with much conceit and haughtiness.

Miss Beaufort remained above an hour alone in her chamber, before she ventured to go near her aunt. Hurt to the soul, that the idle folly of Euphemia should have aroused a terror which had completely unveiled to the eyes of that inconsiderate girl, the empire which Thaddeus held over her fate; Mary overwhelmed with shame, and arraigning her easy credulity, threw herself on the bed.

Horror-struck at hearing he was led along the streets in chains, she could have no other idea, but that hurried into the commission of some dreadful deed, he was become *amenable* to the laws, and might suffer an ignominious death. These thoughts, having rushed at once

on her heart, had deprived her of all self-command. In the conviction that he was a murderer, she felt, as if her life, her honour, her soul, were annihilated. And when, in consequence of her agonies, Euphemia confessed that she had in this last matter, told a falsehood, the tumult of her joy took refuge in insensibility.

Before Miss Beaufort quitted her room, various plans suggested themselves to relieve the unfortunate situation of Thaddeus. She found no hesitation in believing him poor; and perhaps rendered wretchedly so. by the burthen of that sick friend, whom she suspected might be some near relation. At any rate, she resolved that another sun should not pass over her head, and shine on him in a prison. Having determined to pay all his debts herself; she next thought of how she might manage the affair without betraying the hand from whence the assistance came. Had her aunt been well enough to leave the house, she could not have scrupled at unfolding to her, the recent calamity of Mr. Constantine. But well aware that Miss Dorothy's maidenly nicety would be outraged at a young woman appearing the sole mover in such a business, she conceived herself obliged at present, entirely to withhold her confidence, and decide on prosecuting the whole transaction alone.

In consequence of these meditations. her spirits became less discomposed; and, turning towards Miss Dorothy Somerset's apartments, she found the good old lady sipping her chocolate.

"What is this that I have just heard, my dear Mary? Williams tells me that you have been ill?"

Miss Beaufort returned her aunt's gracious inquiry with an affectionate kiss; and, proceeding to inform her, that she had only been alarmed by an invention of Miss Euphemia's; she begged that the subject might drop, it being merely one out of the many schemes, which she believed that young lady had devised to give her torment.

"Ah!" replied Miss Dorothy, "I hope I shall be well enough to travel in the course of a few days! I can now walk with a stick; and upon my word, I am heartily tired, both of lady Dundas and her daughters."

Mary expressed similar sentiments with these: but as the declaration passed her lips, a sigh almost buried the last word. Go when she would, she must leave

Constantine behind; leave him, without an expectation of beholding him more; without a hope of penetrating that sensitive care, with which he had ever eluded any attempt to discover his birth or misfortunes. She sighed over this refinement on delicacy, and '*loved him dearer for his mystery.*'

When the dawn broke next morning, it shone on Mary's yet unclosed eyes. Sleep could find no languid faculty in her head, whilst her heart was agitated with plans for the relief of Thaddeus. The idea of visiting the coffee-house to which she knew the Miss Dundasses directed their letters, and of asking questions about a young and handsome man, made her timidity shrink.

"But," exclaimed she, "I am not going on an errand that need cause a blush on the cheek of prudery itself. I am going to impart some alleviation to the sufferings of the noblest creature that ever walked the earth!"

Perhaps, there are few persons, who, being, auditors of this speech, would have decided quite so candidly on the superlative by which it was concluded. Mary herself, was not wholly divested of doubt about the issue of her conduct; but, conscious that her motive was pure, she descended to the breakfast-room with a quieter mind than countenance.

Never before having had an occasion to throw a false gloss on her actions, she scarcely looked up during breakfast. When the cloth was removed, she rose suddenly from her chair, and turning to Miss Dorothy, who sat at the other end of the parlour with her foot on a stool, she said, "Good bye, aunt. I am going to make some particular calls, but I shall be back in a few hours." Luckily, no one observed her blushing face whilst she spoke, nor the manner in which she shook hands with the old lady, and hurried out of the room.

Breathless with confusion, she could scarcely stand when she arrived in her own chamber; but feeling that no time could be lost, she tied on a muslin cloak, covered her head with a large summer bonnet, and put a long shawl with a veil into her pocket. She hesitated a moment at her chamber-door; her eyes filled with tears drawn from her heart, by that keen spirit of truth which had ever been the guardian of her conduct. Looking up to heaven, she sunk down on her knees, and exclaimed with impetuosity, "Father of Mercy! it is thou only

that knowest my heart! Direct me, I beseech thee! Let me not commit any thing unworthy of myself, or of the unhappy Constantine—for whom I would sacrifice my life, but not my duty to thee!"

Reassured by the confidence which this simple act of devotion had inspired, she took her parasol, and descended the stairs. The porter was alone in the hall. She inquired for her servant.

"He is not returned, Madam."

Miss Beaufort having foreseen the necessity of getting rid of all attendants, had sent her footman on an errand as far as Cheapside.

"It is of no consequence," returned she to the porter, who was just going to propose one of lady Dundas's men; "I cannot meet with any thing disagreeable at this time of day, so I shall walk alone."

The man opened the door; and Mary, with a bounding heart, hastened down the street, across the square, and at the bottom of Orchard-street, stepped into a hackney-coach, which she ordered to drive to Slaughter's coffee-house, St. Martin's lane.

She drew up the glasses; then taking the shawl and veil, with trembling hands, covered her graceful figure; hoping, that the metamorphosis might make her pass very well for a servant-maid. With difficulty she could individualize the many thoughts which agitated her anxious mind whilst the carriage rolled along; and when it drew up at the coffee-house, she involuntarily retreated back into the corner. The coach door was opened.

"Will you alight, Ma'am?"

"No, call a waiter."

A waiter immediately appeared; and Miss Beaufort, in a tolerably collected voice, inquired if Mr. Constantine lived there?

"No Ma'am."

A cold dew stood on Mary's forehead; but taking courage from a latent and last hope, she added, "I know that he has had letters directed to this place."

"O! I beg your pardon, Ma'am?" returned the man, evidently recollecting himself; "That is true; I remember a person of that name has received letters from hence, but they were always fetched away by a little girl."

"And do you not know where he lives?"

"No, Ma'am; answered he, "yet some one else may; I will inquire."

Miss Beaufort bowed her head in token of acknowledgment, and sat shivering with suspense, till he returned followed by another man.

"This person, Ma'am," resumed he, "says he can tell you."

"Thank you, thank you!" cried Mary; then blushing at her eagerness, she stopped, and drew back into the carriage.

"I cannot for certain;" said the man, "but I know the girl very well by sight, who comes for the letters; and I have often seen her standing at the door of a chandler's shop, a good way down the lane. I think it is No. 5, or 6. I sent a woman there, who came after the same gentleman, about a fortnight ago. I dare say he lives there."

Mary's expectations sunk again, when she found that she had nothing but a *dare say* to depend on; and, giving half a crown to each of her informers, she desired the coachman to drive as they would direct him.

Whilst the carriage drove down the lane, with a heart full of fears she looked from side to side, almost believing that she would know by intuition, the house which had contained Constantine. When the man checked his horses, and her eyes fell on the little mean dwelling of Mrs. Robson, she smothered a deep sigh.

"Can this be the house in which Constantine has lived? How comfortless!—And should it not," thought she, as the man got off his box to inquire, "where shall I go for information?"

The appearance of Mrs. Robson, and her immediate affirmative to the question, "Are these Mr. Constantine's lodgings?" at once dispelled this last anxiety. Encouraged by the motherly expression of the good woman's manner, Mary begged leave to alight. Mrs. Robson readily offered her arm; and, with many apologies for the disordered state of the house, led her up stairs to the room which had been the Count's home.

Mary trembled violently; but seeing that every thing depended on self-command, with apparent tranquillity, she received the chair that was presented to her, and turning her eyes from the books and drawings which

91 1216

told her so truly in whose apartment she was, she desired Mrs. Robson, who continued standing, to be seated. The good woman obeyed: after some trepidation, Miss Beaufort asked where Mr. Constantine was? Mrs. Robson coloured, and looking at her questioner for some time, as if doubting what to say, burst into tears.

Mary's ready eyes felt much inclined to flow in concert; but subduing the strong emotions which shook her breast, she added, "I do not come here out of an impertinent curiosity. I have heard of the misfortunes of Mr. Constantine. I am well known to his friends."

"Dear lady!" cried the good woman, grasping at any prospect of succour to her benefactor; "If he has friends, whoever they are, tell them, he is the noblest, most humane gentleman in the world. Tell them, he has saved me and mine, from the deepest want; and now he is sent to prison, because he cannot pay the cruel doctor that attended the poor dead General!"

"What, is his friend dead?" ejaculated Mary, unable to restrian the tears which now streamed over her face.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Bobson; "Poor old gentleman! he is dead sure enough; and, Heaven knows, many has been the dreary hours that dear young man has watched by his pillow! He died in that room."

Mary's swimming eyes would not allow her to discern objects through the open door of that apartment within which the heart of Thaddeus had undergone such variety of misery. Feeling an irresistible wish to know whether the deceased were any relation of Constantine's, she paused a moment to compose the agitation that might have betrayed her, and then asked.

"I thought, ma'am," replied Mrs. Robson, "that you said you knew his friends?"

"Only his English ones," returned Mary, a little confused at the suspicion this answer implied; "I had imagined that this old gentleman might have been his father, or an uncle, or——"

"O no," interrupted Mrs. Robson, sorrowfully; "he has neither father, mother, nor uncle, in the wide world. He once told me they were all dead, and that *he saw* them die. Alas! sweet soul! What a power of *griefs he* must have seen in his young life! But Heaven *will* favour him at last, for though he is in misfortune

himself, he has been a blessing to the widow and the orphan!"

"Do you know the amount of his debts?" asked Mary.

"Only thirty pounds," returned Mrs. Robson; "and for that, they took him out of this room a week ago; and hurried him away without letting me know a word of the matter. I believe, to this hour, I should not have known where he was, if that brute, Mr. Jackson, had not come to demand all that Mr Constantine had left in my care. But I would not let him have it: I told the man, if my lodger had filled my house with bags of gold, *he* should not touch a shilling; and then the ill-natured wretch abused me, and told me that Mr. Constantine was in Newgate."

"In Newgate!"

"Yes, Madam. I immediately ran there, and found him more able to comfort me, than I was able to speak to him,"

"Then be at rest, my good woman," returned Miss Beaufort, rising from her chair; "when you next hear of Mr. Constantine, he shall be at liberty. He has friends, who will not sleep till he is out of prison."

"May Heaven bless you and them, my dear lady!" cried Mrs. Robson, weeping with joy, "for they will release the most generous heart alive."

Mary cast a wishful look on the drawings which stood on a bureau; then withdrawing her eyes with a deep sigh, she descended the stairs. At the street-door, she took Mrs. Robson's hand, and not relinquishing it till she was seated in the coach, pressed it warmly, and leaving within it a purse of twenty guineas, ordered the man to return whence he came.

Now that the temerity of going herself to learn the particulars of Mr. Constantine's fate had been achieved, determined, as she was not to close her eyes whilst the man whom she valued above her life remained a prisoner and in sorrow, she thought it best to consult with Miss Dorothy respecting the speediest means of compassing his emancipation.

In Oxford-road, she desired the man to proceed to Harley-street. She had alighted at lady Dundas's door, paid the coach, and stepped into the hall, before she perceived that a travelling carriage, belonging to her

guardian, had driven away to afford room for her humble equipage.

"Is Sir Robert Somerset come to town?" she hastily inquired of the porter.

"No, Madam: but Mr. Somerset has just arrived."

The next moment Miss Beaufort was in the drawing-room, and clasped within the arms of her cousin.

"Dear Mary!"—"Dear Pemboke!" were the first words which passed between these two affectionate friends.

Miss Dorothy, who doated on her nephew, taking his hand fondly, as he seated himself between her and his cousin, said, in a congratulatory voice, "Mary, our dear boy has come to town purposely to take us down."

"Yes, indeed, rejoined he; "my father is moped to death for want of you both. You know that I am a sad run-about. Lord Arun and Mr. Loftus have been gone these ten days to his lordship's aunt's, in Bedfordshire; and Sir Robert is so completely weary of solitude, that he has commanded me," bowing to the other ladies, "to run off with all the fair inhabitants of this house, sooner than leave you behind."

"I shall be happy at another opportunity to visit Somerset Castle," returned lady Dundas; "but I am constrained to spend this summer in Dumbartonshire I have not yet seen the estate that my poor dear Sir Hector bought of the Duke of Dumfries.

Pembroke offered no attempt to shake this resolution. In the two or three morning calls which he had made with Sir Robert Somerset on the rich widow, he had seen sufficient to regard her arrogant vulgarity with disgust; and for her daughters, they were of two common a stamp, to occupy his mind any deeper than with a magic lantern impression of a tall woman with bold eyes, and the prettiest little blue-eyed fairy he had ever beheld.

After half an hour's conversation with this family group, Miss Beaufort sunk again into abstraction. During the first month of Mary's acquaintance with Thaddeus, she had mentioned, in her correspondence with Pembroke, having met with a very interesting and accomplished emigrant, in the quality of a tutor at lady Dundas's. But her cousin, in his replies, beginning to banter her on the plea of pity being allied to love, she

gradually dropped all mention of his name, as she too truly found, by what insensible degress the union had taken place within her own breast. She remembered these particulars, whilst a new method of obtaining the desired end, suggested itself; and determining (however extraordinary her conduct might seem) to rest on the rectitude of her motives, she resolved, that as a man must be the properest person to transact such a business with propriety, she would engage Pembroke for her agent, without troubling Miss Dorothy about the affair.

So deeply was she absorbed in these reflections, that Somerset observing her vacant eye fixed on the opposite wall, took her hand with an arch smile, and exclaimed,

"Mary! What is the matter? I hope, lady Dundas, you have not suffered any one to run away with her heart? You know that I am her cousin, and it is my unalienable right."

Lady Dundas replied, that young ladies best knew their own secrets.

"That may be, Madam," rejoined he, "but I won't allow Miss Beaufort to know any thing that she does not transfer to me. Is not that true, Mary?"

"Yes," whispered she, colouring; "and the sooner you afford me an apportunity to interest you in one, the more I shall feel obliged to you."

Pembroke pressed her hand in token of assent; and a desultory conversation continuing for another half hour, Mary, who dreaded the wasting of one minute in a day, so momentous to her peace, sat uneasy, till her aunt proposed retiring to dress for dinner, and requested Pembroke to assist her up stairs

When he returned to the drawing room, to his extreme satisfaction, he found all the party separated, excepting Miss Beaufort, who was standing by one of the windows, evidently lost in thought. He approached her, and taking her hand, led her back to the sofa she had quitted.

"Come, my dear cousin," said he, in an affectionate voice, "how can I oblige you?"

Mary struggled with her confusion. Had she less loved *Thaddeus, she* found she could with greater ease *have related the interest* which she took in his fate. She *tried to speak distinctly*, and she accomplished it; al-

though her burning cheek and downcast look, told to the fixed eye of Pembroke, what she vainly attempted to conceal.

"You can, indeed, oblige me! You must remember a Mr. Constantine! I once mentioned him to you in my letters."

"I do, Mary. You thought him amiable!"

"He was the intimate friend of lady Tinemouth," returned she, striving to look up, but the piercing expression which she met from the eyes of Somerset, beating hers down again, covered her face and neck with deeper blushes: she panted for breath.

"Dear Mary!" said Pembroke, pitying her embarrassment, whilst he dreaded that her gentle heart had indeed become the victim of some accomplished and insidious foreigner, "Rely on me, my beloved cousin: consider me as a brother. If you have entangled yourself—"

Miss Beaufort guessed what he would say; and, interrupting him, added, with a more assured air, "No; Pembroke, I have no entanglements. I am going to ask your friendly assistance in behalf of a brave and unfortunate Polander." Pembroke reddened, and she went on. "Mr. Constantine is a gentleman. Lady Tinemouth tells me, he has been a soldier, and that he lost all his possessions in the ruin of his country. Her ladyship introduced him here: I have seen him often, and I know him to be worthy the esteem of every honourable heart. He is now in prison, in Newgate, for a debt of thirty pounds, and I ask you to go and release him? That is my request, my secret; and I confide in your discretion, that you will keep it, even from him."

"Dear, generous, lovely Mary!" cried Pembroke, kissing her hand, "it is thus that you always act! Possessed of all the softness of thy sex, dearest girl," added he still more affectionately, "nature has not alloyed it with one particle of weakness!"

Mary smiled and sighed: if to love tenderly, to be devoted, life and soul to one being, whom she considered as the most perfect work of creation, be weakness? Mary felt that she was the weakest of the weak; and with a languid despondence at her heart, was opening her lips to give some directions to her cousin, when the attentions of both were arrested by a shrill noise of

speakers talking above stairs. Before the cousins had time to make an observation, the disputants descended towards the drawing-room with a violent clamour, and bursting open the door, presented the enraged figure of lady Dundas, followed by Diana, who with a no less swollen countenance, was scolding vociferously, and dragging forward the weeping Euphemia.

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Somerset, amazed at so extraordinary a scene, "What is the matter?"

Lady Dundas lifted up her clenched hands in a passion. "A jade! a hussy!" cried she, incapable to articulate more.

Miss Dundas, still grasping the hands of her struggling sister, broke out next, and turning furiously towards Mary, exclaimed, "You see, Madam, what disgrace your ridiculous conduct to that vagabond foreigner has brought on our family! This bad girl has followed your example, and done worse; she has fallen in love with him!"

Mary, pale and trembling at so rude an accusation, was unable to speak. Lost in wonder, and incensed at his cousin's goodness having been the dupe of imposition, Pembroke stood silent whilst lady Dundas took up the subject.

"Aye," cried she, shaking her daughter by the shoulder, "You little minx! if your sister had not picked up these abominable verses which you chose to write on the absence of this beggarly fellow, I suppose you would have finished the business by running off with him? But you shall go down to Scotland, and be locked up for months. I won't have Sir Hector Dundas's family disgraced by a daughter of mine."

"For pity's sake, lady Dundas," said Pembroke, stepping between her vulgar ladyship and the trembling Euphemia, "do compose yourself. I dare say your daughter is pardonable. In these cases, the fault in general lies with our sex. We are the seducers."

Mary felt obliged to re-seat herself; and with pale attention, she listened to the reply of the frightened Euphemia; who, half assured that her whim of creating a mutual passion in the breast of Thaddeus was no longer tenable, *without either* shame or remorse exclaimed, "*Indeed, Mr. Somerset*, you are right. I never should

have thought of Mr. Constantine, if he had not teized me every time he came with his violent love."

Mary rose hastily from her chair. Though Euphemia coloured at the suddenness of this motion, and the immediate flash which she met from her eye, she went on; "I know Miss Beaufort will deny it, because she thinks he is in love with her; but indeed, indeed, he has sworn a thousand times on his knees, that he was a Russian nobleman in disguise, and adored me above every one else in the world."

"Scoundrel!" cried Pembroke, inflamed with indignation at this double conduct. Afraid to read in the expressive countenance of Mary her shame and horror at this discovery, he turned his eyes on her with trepidation; when, to his surprise, he beheld her standing perfectly unmoved, by the side of the sofa from whence she had arisen. She advanced with a calm step towards Euphemia; and, taking hold of the hand which concealed her face whilst uttering this last falsehood, she drew it away; and regarding her with a serene but penetrating look, "Euphemia!" said she, "you know well, that you are slandering an innocent and an unfortunate man. You know, that never in his life did he give you the slightest reason to suppose that he was attached to you! And as to myself, I can also clear him of making professions to me. Upon the honour of my word, I declare," addressing herself to the whole group, "that he never breathed a sentence to me, beyond mere respect. By this last deviation of Euphemia from truth, you may form an estimate how far the rest she has alleged deserves credit."

The young lady burst into a violent passion of tears; "I will not be brow-beat and insulted, Miss Beaufort!" cried she, taking refuge in noise, since right had deserted her; "You know you would fight his battles through thick and thin! else you would not have fallen into fits yesterday, when I told you he was sent to jail."

This last assault struck Mary motionless; and lady Dundas lifting up her hands, exclaimed, "Good Lord, keep me from the forward misses of these times!—As for you, Miss Euphemia," added she, seizing her daughter by the arm, "you shall leave town to-morrow morning. I will have no tutoring and falling in love in my house; and for you, Miss Beaufort, turning to Mary, who hav-

ing recovered herself, stood at a little distance, "I shall take care to warn Miss Dorothy Somerset to keep an eye over your conduct."

"Madam," replied she, indignantly, "I shall never do any thing which can dishonour either my family or myself; and of that, Miss Dorothy Somerset is too well assured, to doubt, for an instant, even should calumny be as busy with me as it has been injurious to Mr. Constantine."

Mary walked towards the door. When she passed Mr. Somerset, who stood bewildered and frowning beside Miss Dundas, she said, in a collected and decisive voice, "Pembroke, I shall leave the room, but remember I do not release you from your engagement."

Staggered by the open firmness of her manner, he looked after her as she withdrew, and was almost inclined to believe that she possessed the right side of the argument. Malice did not allow him to think so long. The moment the door closed on Miss Beaufort, both the sisters fell on him pell-mell; and the prejudiced illiberality of the one, supported by the ready falsehoods of the other, soon dislodged, all favourable impressions from the mind of Somerset, and filled him anew with displeasure.

In the midst of Diana's third harangue, lady Dundas having ordered Euphemia to be taken to her chamber, Mr. Somerset was left alone, more incensed than ever against Thaddeus, whom he now considered in the light of an adventurer, concealing his poverty, and perhaps his crimes, beneath the garb of lies. That such a character could, by means of his fine person, and a few meretricious talents, work himself into the confidence of Mary Beaufort, pierced her cousin to the soul; and as he mounted the stairs with an intent to seek her in her dressing room, he could not forbear thinking, what satisfaction it would afford him, to hear that Constantine was hanged.

When he opened the room door, he found Miss Beaufort with his aunt. The instant he appeared, the ever-benevolent face of Miss Dorothy contracted into a frown.

"*Nephew!*" cried she, "I shall not take it well in you, if you give stronger credence to the passionate and vulgar assertions of lady Dundas and her daughters,

than you choose to bestow on the tried veracity of your cousin Mary?"

Pembroke felt that if his countenance had been a faithful transcript of his mind, Miss Beaufort did not err, in supposing that he believed the foreigner to be a villain. Feeling it impossible to relinquish his reason, into what he now denominated the partial hands of his aunt and cousin, he persisted in his opinion to both the ladies, that their unsuspicious natures had been rendered subservient to knavery and artifice.

"I would not willingly, my dear Madam," said he, addressing Miss Dorothy, "think so meanly of your sex, as to imagine that an atrocity can exist in the female heart, which could give birth to cruel and unprovoked calumnies against an innocent man. I cannot suspect the Miss Dundases of such needless guilt; particularly poor Euphemia, whom I pity. Lady Dundas forced me to read her verses; and they are too full of love and regret for this adventurer to come from the same breast which could wantonly blacken his character. Such wicked inconsistencies in so young a woman, are not half so probable as that you, my dear aunt and cousin, have both been deceived."

"Well, nephew," returned the old Lady, "you are very peremptory. Methinks a little more mercy of opinion would better become your youth! I knew nothing of this unhappy man's present distress, till Miss Beaufort mentioned it to me; but before she breathed a word in his favour, I had conceived a very high respect for his merits: from the first hour in which I saw him, I gathered by his deportment and conversation, that they were far above his fortunes. I thought so; I still think so; and, notwithstanding all which the Dundases may choose to fabricate, I am determined to believe the assertions of an honest countenance.

Pembroke smiled, whilst he compelled his aunt's reluctant hand into his, and said, "I see, my dear Madam, that you are bigoted to the idol of your own fancy! I do not in the least doubt this Mr. Constantine's enchantments; but you must pardon me, if I keep my senses at liberty. I shall think of him as I could almost swear he deserves, although I am aware I hazard your affection by my firmness." He then turned to Mary, who, with a swelling and distressed heart, was stan-

ding by the chimney; "Forgive me, my dearest cousin," continued he, addressing her in a softened voice; "that I feel myself forced to appear harsh? It is the first time I ever dissented from you; it is the first time, Mary, I ever thought you prejudiced!"

Mary drew the back of her hand over her glistening eyes. All the tender affections of Pembroke's bosom smote him at once; and throwing his arms round his cousin's waist, he strained her to his breast, and added, "Ah! why, dear girl, must I love you better for thus giving me pain? Every way my darling Mary is more estimable. Even now, whilst I oppose you, I feel, that though your goodness is abused, it has been cheated into error by the affectation of honourable calamities!"

Mary felt, "that if the prudence of reserve and decorum dictates silence in some circumstances, in others, a prudence of an higher order would justify her in declaring her thoughts." Accordingly, she withdrew from the clasping arms of Mr. Somerset; and whilst her beautiful figure seemed to dilate into more than its usual dignity, she mildly replied:—

"Think what you please, Pembroke; I shall not contend with you: Mr. Constantine is of a nature not to be hidden by obscurity; his character will defend itself: and all that I have to add is this, I do not release you from your promise. Could a woman transact the affair with propriety, I should not keep you to so disagreeable an office; but I have passed my word to myself, that I shall neither 'slumber nor sleep,' till he is out of prison." She put a pocket-book into Pembroke's hand, and added, take that, my dear cousin; and without suffering a syllable to transpire, by which he may suspect who served him, accomplish what I have desired."

"I will obey you, Mary," returned he, looking gravely; "but I am sorry that such rare enthusiasm was not awakened by a worthier object. When you see me again I hope I shall be enabled to say, that your ill-placed generosity is satisfied."

"Fie, nephew, fie!" cried Miss Dorothy, "I could not have supposed you capable of conferring a favour *so ungraciously.*"

Mr. Somerset, pained at what he nominated the obstinate infatuation of Miss Beaufort; and, if possible,

more chagrined, by what he considered the blind absurd encouragement of his aunt, lost the whole of last reprimand, in his hurry to quit the room.

Disturbed, displeased, and anxious, he stepped in hackney coach,—ordering it to drive to Newgate. determined to go through the business, without ex sing himself to an interview with a man he must n condemn as an artful and unprincipled villain.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

FOUR VOLUMES IN TWO.

VOL. IV.

The time of life is short;
To spend that shortness basely, were too long,
If life did ride upon a dial's point,
Still ending at the arrival of an hour.

SHAKESPEARE.

BY MISS PORTER.

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1817.

THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

CHAPTER I.

The first week of the Count's confinement was rendered less intolerable, by the daily visits of Mrs. Robson; who, having brought his drawing materials, enabled him, through the means of the print-seller, to purchase some civility from the brutal and hardened people who were his gaolers. After the good woman had performed her diurnal kindness, Thaddeus used to turn to the sad circumference of his miserable apartment to seek amusement. When his pencil had accomplished its task, it wearied him: when he took up a book, having read it before, it failed to engage him. He possessed nothing to beguile the tedious day, and more tedious night. His spirit was in solitude; in the most dismal solitude; banished and shut out from all that could render life desirable.

The elasticity and enterprise of soul, inherent in youth, renders no calamity so difficult to be born, as is the fettering of its best years and most active virtues, within the walls of a prison. Thaddeus felt this benumbing conviction in every pulse of his ardent and energetic heart. He retraced all that he had been. He looked on what he was. Though he had reaped glory when a boy, his '*noon of manhood*,' his evening sun, was to waste its light, and set in captivity.

At short and distant intervals, such melancholy re*veries gave place* to the pitying image of Mary Beau-

fort. It sometimes visited him in the day, it always was his companion during night. He courted her lovely idea, as a spell that for a while stole him from painful reflections. With an entranced heart, he recalled every lineament of her beautiful face, every dissolving note of that voice, which had hurried him into the rashness of touching her hand. One moment, he pressed her gold chain closer to his heart, almost believing what lady Tinemouth had insinuated; the next, he would sigh over his credulity, and return with despondent, though equally intense feeling, to her bewitching recollection.

The more he pondered on the purity of her manners, the elevated principles to which he could trace her actions, and, above all, the benevolent confidence with which she had ever treated him (a man contemned by one part of her acquaintance, and merely received on trust by the remainder) the more he found reasons to admire her character and adore herself. When he drew a comparison between Miss Beaufort, and women of the same quality, whom he had seen in England and in other countries, he contemplated with delighted wonder that spotless mind, which having passed through the various dangers annexed to wealth and fashion, still bore itself uncontaminated. She was beautiful, and she did not regard it; she was accomplished, but she did not attempt a display: what she had acquired from education, the graces had so incorporated with her native intelligence, that the whole perfection of her character seemed to have been stamped at once by the beneficent hand of Providence.

Thaddeus never felt her numberless attractions so fascinating, as when witnessing the generous eagerness with which, forgetful of her own almost unparalleled talents, she pointed out merit, and dispensed applause to the deserving. Mary's nature was composed entirely of the gentlest elements, unalloyed by indiscrimination or insipidity. Whilst the Count saw that the urbanity of her disposition made her politeness universal, he perceived that neither rank, riches, nor splendour, could extract from her bosom, one spark of that lambent flame, which streamed from her heart like fire to the sun, towards the united glory of genius and goodness.

He dwelt on this lovely, unsophisticated character, with an enthusiasm bordering on idolatry. He recollec-

ted that she had been educated by the mother of Pembroke Somerset; and turning from the double remembrance with a sigh fraught with all the bitterness and sweetness of love, he acknowledged, how much wisdom (which includes virtue) gives spirit and immortality to beauty; "Yes," cried he, "it is the fragrance of the flower, which lives after the bloom of its leaves are withered."

From the like seducing day-dreams, Thaddeus was one evening awakened by the entrance of the jailor into his cell. The man presented a sealed paper, and told him that he had brought it from a stranger, who, having paid the debts for which he was confined, had immediately withdrawn, desiring that that packet might be delivered to Mr. Constantine.

Scarcely crediting this information, Thaddeus hastily opened the letter, hoping that it might throw some light on his benefactor: a blank cover, enclosing notes to the amount of fifty pounds, presented itself. Surprised at this, he told the man to leave him, who, without much ceremony, was staring at the money over his shoulder; and sitting down, he tried to think who could have acted so generously, and yet be so careful to hide their bounty.

He had seen sufficient proofs of a heedless want of charity in Miss Euphemia Dundas, to lead him to suppose that she could not be so munificent and solicitous for concealment. Besides, how could she have learnt his situation? He thought it was impossible: and that impossibility compelled an erratic hope of his present liberty having sprung from the friendship of Miss Beaufort, to pass by him with painful swiftness.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, starting from his chair, "It is the indefatigable spirit of lady Sara Roos, that I recognise in this deed! the generous, but unhappy interest which she yet takes in my fate, has discovered my last misfortune, and thus seeks to relieve me!"

The moment he had conceived this supposition, he believed it; and, taking up a pen, with a grateful, though disturbed soul, he addressed to her ladyship the following guarded note:

"*To the Right Honourable Lady Sara Roos.*

"An unfortunate exile, who feels himself already overpowered by the sense of not having deserved the notice which lady Sara Roos has hitherto deigned to take of his misfortunes, was this morning liberated from prison in a manner so generous and delicate, that he can affix the act to no other than the noble heart of her ladyship.

"The object of this bounty, bending under the weight of obligations which he cannot repay, begs permission to reinclose the bills which lady Sara's agent transmitted to him; but, as the deed which procures his freedom cannot be recalled, he accepts, with the most grateful emotions, that new instance of her ladyship's goodness.

Newgate."

Thaddeus dispatched the letter by a porter, and was preparing another to acquaint Mrs. Robson of his release, when the good woman made her appearance. She hastened up to him with an animated countenance, and exclaimed before he had time to speak, "Dear Sir! I have seen a dear sweet lady, who has promised not to sleep till you are out of this horrid place!"

The suspicions of the Count, that his benefactress was indeed lady Sara Roos, were now confirmed: seating his landlady in the only chair which furnished the apartment; to satisfy her sensitive decorum, he took his station on the table, and then said, "the lady has already fulfilled her engagement; I am free; and only wait for an answer to my acknowledgments, before I quit the prison."

At this assurance, the delighted Mrs. Robson, crying and laughing by turns, did not cease her ejaculations of joy, till the messenger, who had taken the letter to St. James's place, returned with a reply written by her ladyship, and evidently blotted with tears. Thaddeus took out the re-enclosed bills with a flushed cheek, and read as follows:

"I cannot be mistaken in recognizing the proud and *high-souled* Constantine, in the writer of the lines which *I hold in* my hand. Could any thing have imparted to *me more* comfort, than your generous belief that there

is indeed some virtue left in my wretched and repentant heart, it would arise from the consciousness, of having been the happy person who has succoured you in your distress. But no; that enjoyment was beyond my deserving. The bliss of being the lightener of your sorrows, was reserved by heaven for a less criminal creature. I did not even know that you were in prison. Since our dreadful parting, I have never dared to inquire after you; and much as it might console me to serve one so truly valued. I will not insult your nice honour by offering any farther instance of my friendship than what will evince my soul's gratitude to your prayers, and my acquiescence with the commands of duty.

"My husband is here, without perceiving the ravages which misery and remorse have made in my unhappy heart. Time, perhaps may render me less unworthy of his tenderness: at present I detest myself.

"I return the bills: you may safely use them, for they never were mine. S. R."

The generous heart of Thaddeus bled over every line of this letter. He felt that it bore a stamp of truth, which did not leave him a moment in doubt that he owed his release to some other hand. Whilst he folded it up, his suspicions next lighted on lady Tinemouth. He had received one short letter from her ladyship since her departure, mentioning Maria's staying in town to meet Mr. Montresor; Miss Beaufort's detentio non account of Miss Dorothy's accident; and closing with the intelligence of her own safe arrival at the Wold. The idea struck him, that as he had delayed answering this letter in consequence of his late embarrassment, she had made some inquiries regarding him, which having led to a discovery of his situation, most probably Miss Egerton had visited Mrs. Robson by the commands of the Countess, and, finding the information true, had proceeded these lengths to obtain his release.

According to these suppositions, he questioned his landlady about the appearance of the lady whom she had seen. Mrs. Robson replied, "She was indifferently tall, but so wrapped up that I could neither see her face nor figure, though I am certain, from the softness of her voice, she must be both young and handsome. Sweet

creature! I am sure she wept two or three times. Besides, she is the most charitable soul alive, next to you, Sir, for she gave me a purse with nineteen guineas; and she told me, she knew your honour's English friends."

This narration, substantiating his hope of lady Tinemouth being his benefactress, that the kind Maria was her agent: and the gentleman who had defrayed the debt, Mr. Montresor; he found himself easier under an obligation, which a mysterious liberation would have doubled. He knew the Countess's maternal love for him. To reject her present benefaction, would be to sacrifice gratitude on the altar of morbid delicacy. He felt, that 'nothing can be great, that it is great to despise;' and rather than pain lady Tinemouth, by relinquishing her bounty, he smothered in his breast the embers of a haughty repulsion, which having burst forth in the first hour of his misfortunes, was ever ready to consume any wish that might engender the weight of obligation.

Thaddeus quitted his cell; and, ordering that a coach might be brought to the great gate of Newgate, he was obeyed; and with tankfulness to heaven, for again being permitted to taste the wholesome breeze of a free atmosphere, he handed his delighted landlady into the vehicle.

So true it is, that advantages are only appreciated by comparison; when the Count re-entered his humble apartment in St. Martin's lane, he considered it a palace of luxury, opposed to the dungeon he had left.

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Robson, pointing to a chair, "there is the very seat in which that dear lady sat! Sweet creature! if I had known that I durst believe all that she promised, I would have fallen on my knees, and kissed her feet, for bringing back your dear self!"

"I thank you, my good madam," returned Thaddeus, smiling with a brimming eye at such ardent demonstration of affection; "but where is little Nancy, that I may shake hands with her?"

The child welcomed the Count with those animated expressions of joy, inseperable from a good and inexperienced heart. It being late, he retired at an early hour to his pillow, where he found that repose, which had been sought in vain, within the gloomy and (he supposed) eternal walls of a prison.

In the morning, he was awakened by the light footsteps of his pretty waiting maid entering the front room. His chamber door being open, he asked her what was the hour? she replied, nine o'clock; adding, that she had brought a letter, which one of the waiters from Slaughter's coffee-house had just left, with the information, that he did so by the orders of a footman in rich livery.

Thaddeus desired it might be given to him. The child obeyed, and quitted the room. He saw that the superscription was in Miss Dundas's hand; and opening it with pleasure, because every thing interested him which came from the house that contained Mary Beaufort, to his amazement and consternation, he read the following passionate and intemperate lines:

"To Mr. Constantine.

"Mr. Constantine,

"By a miraculous circumstance, this morning, your deep and daring plan of villainy has been discovered to lady D—— and myself. The deluded victim, whom, your arts and falsehoods, would have seduced to dishonour her family by connecting herself with a vagabond, has at length seen through her error; and now detests you as much as ever your insufferable presumption could have hoped she would distinguish you with her regard. Thank Heaven! you are completely exposed! This young woman of fashion (whose name I will not trust in the same page with yours) has made a full confession of your villainous seductions; of her own reprehensible weakness, in ever having deigned to listen to one so low. She desires me to assure you, that she hates you; and commands you never again to attempt the insolence of appearing in her sight. Indeed, this is the language of every soul in this house, of lady D——, Miss. D—— S——, Miss B——, besides that of D——D——."

Harley-street.

Thaddeus read this ridiculous letter twice, before he could perfectly comprehend its meaning. In a paroxysm of indignation at the vile subterfuge under which he did not doubt Euphemia had screened some accidental discovery of her absurd passion, he hastily threw on his clothes and determined, though in defiance of Miss

Dundas's mandates, to fly to Harley-street, and clear himself in the eyes of Mary and her venerable aunt.

Having flown rather than walked, he arrived in sight of lady Dundas's house, just as a coach, full of her ladyship's maids and packages drove from the door. Hurrying up the step, he asked the porter, who was standing in the hall, if Miss Dorothy Somerset were at home.

"No," replied the man; "she and Miss Beaufort, with Miss Dundas and Mr. Somerset, went out of town this morning by eight o'clock; and my lady and Miss Euphemia, about an hour ago, set off for Dumbarton, in Scotland, where they mean to stay all the summer."

At this information, which seemed to be the sealing of his condemnation with Mary, Thaddeus felt his heart pierced to the core. Unacquainted, till this moment, with the torments attending the calumniated, he could scarcely subdue the tempest in his breast, when forced to receive the conviction, that the woman whom he loved above all the world, now regarded him as not merely a villain, but the meanest of villains.

He returned home, indignant and agitated. The knowledge that Pembroke Somerset had probably listened to the falsehoods of Euphemia, without suggesting one word in defence of him who had once been his friend, inflicted a pang more deadly than the rest. Shutting himself within his apartment, tossed and tortured in soul, he traversed the room, till, resolving to seek redress from the advice of lady Tinemouth, he descended the stairs; and telling Mrs. Robson, that he should leave London next morning for Lincolnshire; begged her not to be uneasy on his account, as he went on business, and would return in a few days.

The good woman almost wept at this intelligence; and when she saw him depart, followed the wheels of the stage-coach with sighs and blessings. For the Count, his long journey passed in resentful reveries, or affectionate anticipations of the moment when he should pour out his gratitude to the maternal tenderness of lady Tinemouth; and learn from her delicacy and experience, how to wipe from the minds of Miss Dorothy Somerset and her lovely niece, sentiments of him, so *dishonouring*, torturing, and false.

CHAPTER II.

The porter at lady Dundas's had been strictly correct in his account respecting the destination of the dispersed members of her ladyship's household:

Whilst Pembroke Somerset was sullenly executing his forced act of benevolence at Newgate, Miss Dundas suddenly took it into her ever scheming head, to compare the merits of Somerset's rich expectancy with the pennyless certainty of Lascelles. She considered, how high the wife of a baronet stood in the train of precedence over the humble *cara sposa* of a man, owning no other rank, than a reflected lustre, shot from the coronet of an elder brother. Lady Somerset, she thought, would be a prettier salutation, than the empty courtesy of Honourable. Besides, Pembroke was very handsome; Lascelles, only tolerably so: indeed some woman had presumed to call him ugly; but they were odd mortals, who, not believing the *metempsychosis* doctrine of the taylor and his decorating adjuncts, could not comprehend, that although a mere human creature could have no such property, a man of fashion may possess an *elixir vitæ*, which makes age youth; deformity beauty; and even transforms vice into virtue.

In spite of remembrance, which reminded Diana, how often, amidst a little bevy of females, she had contended with acrimony, that all Mr. Lascelles's teeth were his own; that his nose was not a bit too long, being an exact *fac simile* of the same feature which reared its sublime curve over the capacious mouth of his noble brother lord Castle-Conway; notwithstanding this, the Pythagorean pretensions of fashion began to lose their ascendancy; and, in the recesses of her mind, when Miss Dundas compared the light elegance of Pembroke's figure, with the heavy limbs of her present lover; Pembroke's dark and ever-animated eyes, with the gooseberry orbs of Lascelles; she dropped the parallel; and resolving to captivate the heir of Somerset castle, admitted no remorse at jilting the brother of Castle-Conway.

To this end, before Pembroke's return from Newgate, *Diana had told her* mother of her intention to accompany

Miss Dorothy down to the baronet's; where she would remain, till her ladyship should think Euphemia might be trusted to rejoin her in town. Neither Miss Dorothy nor Miss Beaufort liked this arrangement; and, with an aching heart, the latter prepared to take her seat next morning, at an early hour, in the travelling equipage which was to convey them all into Leicestershire.

At supper, Pembroke sullenly informed Mary of the success of her commands: that Mr. Constantine was free. This assurance, though imparted with so ungracious an air, laid her head with less distraction on her pillow: and, as she stepped into Sir Robert's carriage next day, enabled her with more ease to deck her lips with smiles. She felt that the penetrating eyes of her cousin were never withdrawn from her face; offended with his perverseness and their scrutiny, she tried to baffle their inspection. She attempted gaiety, when she gladly would have wept. But when the coach mounted the top of Highgate Hill, and discovered a last view of that city, which contained the being whose happiness was the sole object of her thoughts and prayers, she leaned out of the window, to hide a tear which she could not repress; feeling that another and another would start, she complained of the dust: and, pulling her veil over her eyes, drew back into the corner of the carriage.—The trembling of her voice and hands during the performance of this little artifice, too well explained to Pembroke what was passing in her mind: at once dispelling the gloom which had shrouded his own countenance, he turned towards her with a compassionate tenderness in his words and looks, which, gradually softening her displeasure into the easy conversation of reciprocal affection, rendered the remainder of their long journey less irksome.

When at the end of the second day, Mary found herself in the old avenue leading to the base of the hill that sustains the revered walls of Somerset castle, a mingled emotion took possession of her breast; and when the carriage had attained the foot of the highest terrace, she sprung impatiently out of it, and hastening up the stone stairs into the front hall, met her uncle at the door of the breakfast parlour, where he held out his arms to receive her.

"My Mary! My darling!" cried he, embracing her

now wet cheek, and straining her throbbing bosom to his own, "Why my dear love," added he, almost carrying her into the room, "I am afraid that this visit to town has injured your nerves! Whence arises this agitation?"

Mary knew that it had injured her peace; and, now that the flood-gates of her long-repelled tears had opened, it was beyond her art, or the soothings of her affectionate uncle, to stay them. A moment after, her cousin entered the room, followed by Miss Dorothy and Miss Dundas. Miss Beaufort hastily rose to conceal what she could not check, and, kissing Sir Robert's hand, asked permission to retire, under the pretence of regaining those spirits which had been dissipated by the fatigues of her journey.

In her own chamber, she did indeed struggle to recover herself. She shuddered at the impetuosity of her feelings, when once abandoned of their reins; and, resolved from this hour to hold a stricter guard over the consequence of her ill-fated passion.

She sat down in the window of her apartment, and, looking down the extensive vale of Somerset, watched the romantic wanderings of the Witham, winding its course through the domains of the castle, and nourishing the roots of those immense oaks, which still wave their centential arms over its quiet stream. Mary reflected on the revolution which had taken place in her mind, since she walked on its banks the evening that preceded her visit to London. Then, she was free as air, and gay as the lark; each object was bright and lovely to her eyes: hope seemed to woo her from every green slope, every remote dingle: all nature breathed of joy, because her own breast was the home of gladness. Now, all continued the same, but she was changed. Surrounded by beauty, she acknowledged its presence; the sweetness of the flowers bathed her senses in fragrance; the setting sun, gilding the heights, shed a yellow glory over the distant hills; the birds were hailing the fallen dew that spangled every leaf; Mary gazed around, and sighed heavily when she said to herself, "Even in this paradise I shall be wretched. Alas! my *heart is far away!* My soul lingers about one, whom I *may never more* behold; about one who may soon cease *to remember* that such a being as Mary Beaufort is in

existence. He will leave England!" cried she, raising her hands and eyes to the glowing heavens. "He will live, he will die, far, far, from me! In a distant land he will wed another, whilst I shall know no wish that strays from him."

Whilst Mary indulged in these soliloquies, she forgot both Sir Robert and her resolution, till he sent her maid to beg, that if she were better, she would come down and make tea for him. At this summons, Miss Beaufort dried her eyes and descended with an assumed serenity to the saloon, where the family were now assembled. The Baronet having greeted Miss Dundas with an hospitable welcome, seated himself between his sister and his son; and whilst he received his favourite bevdrage from the hands of the lovely Mary, he found that comfort had once more re-entered his bosom.

Sir Robert Somerset, was a man whose appearance alone must have attracted respect. His person bore the stamp of dignity; and his manners, which possessed the exquisite polish of travel, secured him universal esteem. Though little beyond fifty, the various perplexities to which he had been obnoxious in youth, had not only rendered his hair perfectly grey, but by clouding his once brilliant eyes with thoughtfulness, had marked his aspect with old age and melancholy. The baronet's entrance into gay life was celebrated for wit and vivacity: He was the animating spirit of every party; when strange to tell, an inexplicable metamorphosis took place. Soon after his return from abroad, his marriage with Miss Beaufort (a woman whom he loved to madness) taking place, excess of happiness seemed to change his nature, and gave his character a gradual tinge of sadness. After her ladyship's death, the alteration in his mind, produced still more extraordinary effects, and shewed itself more than once in all the terrors of threatening insanity.

The latest attack of the kind which assailed him, was about the middle of last winter; it seized him under the appearance of a swoon, as he sat reading the newspaper at breakfast; he was carried to bed, and awoke in a delirium, which menaced either immediate death, or the total extinction of his intellects. However, neither of these dreads being confirmed, in the course of several weeks, to the wonder of every body, he recovered both

his health and his sound mind. Notwithstanding this happy event, the circumstances of his danger having deeply affected the hearts of his family, he continued to be a very anxious object of attention. Indeed solicitude did not terminate with them: the munificence of his disposition having spread itself through every county in which he owned a rood of land, as many prayers ascended for the repose of his spirit, as had ever petitioned heaven from the mouths of '*monkish beadsmen*,' in favour of power or virtue.

Since the demise of lady Somerset, this excellent man, drew all his comfort from the amiable qualities of his son Pembroke. Sometimes in his livelier hours, which came '*like angel visits, few and far between*,' he amused himself with the playfulness of the little earl of Arun, the pompous erudition of Mr. Loftus (who was become his lordship's tutor) and giving occasional entertainments to the gentry of his neighbourhood.

Of all the personages contained within this circle (which the hospitality of Sir Robert extended to a circumference of thirty miles) lord Berrington was the most respected.

The numerous visitants who attended the Somerset-hunt, were too gay to be admitted with intimacy. A son of one of these itinerant families (which, ever on the full chace of pleasure, had fixed itself at Woodhill Lodge, on the right of the little town of Grantham) by calling at the castle soon after the arrival of the London party, caused a trifling change in its disposition.

When Richard Shafto was ushered into the saloon, he nodded to Sir Robert, and, turning his back on the ladies, told Pembroke that he had ridden to Somerset on purpose to bring him to Woodhill Lodge.

"Upon my soul," cried he, "if you don't come, I will leave my mother. Would you believe it, that on account of Sir Hallerand having gone out plenipotentiary to some damned place on the continent, she has taken it into her head to rusticate in the country till his return? Upon my soul, I am moped to death! There is not a creature but yourself within twenty miles, that I would speak to; not a man worth a sixpence. I wish to heaven my father had broken his neck before he had *accepted that rascally* embassy, which encumbers me *with the* charge of an old woman!"

After this dutiful wish, which brought down a weighty admonition from Miss Dorothy, the young gentleman promised to beg her pardon for his ill manners, provided she could persuade Pembroke to accompany him to the lodge. Mr. Somerset did not evince much alacrity in his consent; but purposely to rid his family of such a noisy guest, he rose from his chair, and acquiescing in the sacrifice of a few days to good-nature, bade his father farewell, and gave orders for a ride to Grantham.

As soon as the gentlemen had left the saloon, Miss Dundas ran up stairs, and, from her dressing-room window in the west tower, pursued the steps of their horses cantering down the winding steep into the high-road. An abrupt angle of the hill hiding them at once from her view, she turned round with a toss of the head, and flinging herself into a chair, exclaimed, "Now I shall be bored to death by this abominable prosing family! I wish the devil had taken Shafto, before he thought of coming here!"

In consequence of the humour which engendered the above, no very flattering compliment to the society at the castle, Miss Dundas descended to the dining-room, with sulky looks and a chilling air. She swallowed what the baronet laid on her plate, with an indolent appetite, cut her meat into mince, and dragged the vegetables over the table-cloth. Miss Dorothy coloured at this indifference to the usual neatness of her damask covers; but Miss Dundas was so completely in the sullens, that, heedless of any other feelings than her own, she continued to pull and knock about the things just as her ill-humour dictated.

The petulance of this lady's behaviour, did not in the least assimilate with the customary tranquillity of Sir Robert's table; and, when the cloth was drawn, he could not refrain from expressing his concern, that Somerset castle appeared so little calculated to afford satisfaction to a daughter of lady Dundas. Miss Dundas attempted some awkward declaration, that she never was more amused, never happier. But the small credit which Sir Robert gave to her assertion, was fully honoured the next morning, by the ready manner in which *she accepted* a casual invitating to spend the ensuing *day and night* at lady Shafto's. Her ladyship called on

Miss Dorothy, and intending to have a party in the evening, invited the two young ladies to return with her to Grantham, and be her guests for a week. Mary, whose spirits had much to combat, before they could regain their former serenity, declined her civility; while, with a gleam of pleasure, she heard it accepted by Miss Dundas, who departed with her ladyship for the lodge.

Whilst the enraptured Diana, all life and glee, bowled along with lady Shafto, anticipating the delight of once more seating herself at the elbow of Pembroke Somerset; Mary Beaufort, relieved from a load of ill-requited attentions, walked out into the park, to enjoy, in solitude, the intoxicating sorrow of thinking on the unhappy and far distant Constantine. Regardless of the way, her footsteps, though robbed of elasticity by nightly watching and daily regret, led her beyond the park, to the ruined church of Woolthorpe, its southern boundary. Her eyes were fixed on the opposite horizon. It was the extremity of Leicestershire; and far, behind those hills, was that London, which contained the object dearest to her soul. The wind seemed scarcely to breathe as it floated towards her; but it came from that quarter; and, believing it laden with every sweet which love can fancy, she threw back her veil, to inhale its balm; then blaming herself for such baby weakness, she turned, blushing, homewards, and wept at what she thought, the unreasonable tenacity of her passion.

The arrival of Miss Dundas at the lodge, was communicated to the two young men on their return from a traverse on foot of half the country in quest of game. The news extracted an oath from Shafto; but rather pleased Somerset, who augured some amusement from her attempts at wit and judgment. Tired to death; and, dinner being over when they entered, with ravenous appetites they swallowed their uncomfortable meal in a remote room; then throwing themselves along the sofas, yawned and slept for nearly two hours.

Pembroke waking first, suddenly jumped on the floor, and shaking his disordered clothes, exclaimed, "Shafto! Get up. This is abominable! Efaith, I cannot help thinking, that if we spend one half of our days in pleasure, and the other in lolling off its fatigues, we shall have past through life more to our shame than our profit!"

"Then you may take the shame, and leave me the profit;" cried his companion, turning himself round: "so good night to you."

Pembroke rang the bell. A servant entered.

"What o'clock is it?"

"Eight, sir."

"Who are up stairs?"

"My lady, sir, and a large party of ladies."

"There now!" cried Shafto, yawning and kicking out his legs. "You surely won't go to be bored with such damned maudlin company?"

"I choose to join your mother," replied Pembroke.

"Are there any gentlemen, Stephen?"

"One, sir; Doctor Denton."

"Confound you!" roared Shafto, "what do you stand jabbering there for? You won't let me sleep. Can't you send away the fellow, and go look yourself?"

"I will, if you can persuade yourself to rise off that sofa, and come with me?"

"May the devil catch me if I do! Get about your business, and leave me to mine."

"You are incorrigible, Shafto!" returned Pembroke, as he closed the door. He ascended the stairs to change his dress, and before he gained the second flight, he had resolved, not to spend two other whole days in the company of such an unmannered, unideaed cub.

On Mr. Somerset's entrance into lady Shafto's drawing-room, he saw many ladies, but only one gentleman, who was the before-mentioned Doctor Denton; a poor shallow-headed, parasitical animal. Pembroke, having seen sufficient of him to despise his pretensions both to science and sincerity, passed his wide smirk and eager inquiries, with a distancing bow, and took his seat by the side of the now delighted Miss Dundas. The vivid spirits of Diana, which she managed should be peculiarly sparkling when he made his appearance, entertained him; when compared with the insipid sameness of her ladyship, or the brutal ribaldry of her son, her mirth was wit, and her remarks wisdom.

"Dear Mr. Somerset!" cried she, "how good you are to break this sad solemnity. I vow, until you shewed *your face*, I thought the days of paganism had revived, *and that*, lacking of men, we were assembled here to celebrate the mysteries of the Bona Dea."

"Lacking of men?" replied he, smiling, "You have overlooked the assiduous Doctor Denton."

"O no; that is a cameleon in man's clothing. He breathes air, he eats air, he emits air; and a most pestilential breath it is: only observe how he is pouring nonsense into the ear of yonder sable statue."

Pembroke directed his eyes as Miss Dundas had desired him; they fell on Doctor Denton, who stood whispering, bowing, and pressing his breast, before a lady in black, who sat, almost concealed by the window curtain. The lady put up her lip, the Doctor proceeded, she frowned, he would not be daunted, the lady rose from her seat, and, slightly bending her head, crossed the room. Whilst Mr. Somerset was contemplating her majestic figure, and fine, though pale features, Miss Dundas touched his arm, smiling satirically, she repeated in an affected voice:

"Hail, pensive Nun! devout and holy!
"Hail, divinest Melancholy!"

"If she be melancholy, returned Pembroke, unconsciously sighing, "I would for ever say.

"Hence, unholy Mirth of Folly born!"

Miss Dundas reddened. She had never liked this interesting woman, who was not only too handsome for competition, but possessed of an understanding whose temper would not tolerate ignorance and presumption. Diana's ill-natured impertinence having several times received deserved chastisement from that quarter, she was vexed to the soul, when Pembroke closed his animated response with the question, "Who is she?"

Miss Dundas, rather too bitterly for the success of her design on his heart, iterated his words, and then answered, "Why she is crazed. She lives in a place called Harrowby Abbey, at the top of that hill;" continued she, pointing through the opposite window to a distant rising ground, on which the moon was shining brightly: "and, I am told, frightens the cottagers out of their wits by her midnight strolls."

Hardly knowing how to credit this wild account, Pembroke asked his informer if she were serious.

"Never more so."

"Her eyes are uncommonly beautiful. You must be jesting," returned he; "they seem perfectly reasonable."

Miss Dundas laughed. "Like Hamlet's, they '*knew not seems, but have that within which passeth show!*' believe me, she is mad enough for bedlam; and of that I could soon convince you. I wonder how lady Shafto thought of inviting her at all!"

"Well," cried Pembroke, "if those features announce madness, I shall never admire a look of sense again."

"Bless us!" exclaimed Miss Dundas, "you are wonderfully struck! Don't you see, she is old enough to be your mother?"

"That may be," answered he, smiling; "nevertheless, she is one of the most lovely women I ever beheld. Come, tell me her name."

"I will satisfy you in a moment," rejoined Diana; "and then away with your rhapsodies! She is the very countess of Tinemouth, who brought, as her most particular friend, that vagabond foreigner to our house, who would have run off with Phemy."

"Lady Tinemouth!" exclaimed Pembroke, "I never saw her before. My ever lamented mother met her whilst I was abroad, and she esteemed her highly. Pray present me to her!"

"Impossible!" replied Diana, vexed at the turn his curiosity had taken; "I wrote to her about the insidious wretch, and now we don't speak."

"Then, I will introduce myself," answered he: he was moving away, when Miss Dundas (whose delight lay in tormenting those whom she could not subjugate) caught hold of his arm, and, by some attempts at badinage and raillery, withheld him in his place, till the Countes made her farewell curtsey to lady Shafto, and the door was closed.

Disappointed at this manœuvre, Pembroke re-seated himself, and pondering on what could be the reason why his aunt and cousin had not heard of her ladyship's arrival at Harrowby, he determined to wait on her next day. Regardless of every word which the provoked Diana addressed to him, he remained silent and meditating, till the loud voice of Shafto roaring in his ear, made him turn suddenly round. Miss Dundas tried to laugh at his reverie, though she knew that such a flagrant instance of inattention was death to her hopes; but Pembroke, not inclined to partake in the jest, coolly asked his bearish companion what he wanted?

"Nothing, upon my soul," cried he, "but to hear you speak. What the devil were you looking at on the carpet? Miss Dundas tells me, you have lost your heart to yonder grim Countess, that my mother wanted me to gallant up the hill?"

"Shafto!" answered Pembroke, rising from his chair, "You cannot be speaking of lady Tinemouth?"

"Efaith, I am!" roared he: "and if she be such a scamp as to live without a carriage, I won't be her lacquey for nothing: Two miles are not to be tramped over by me, with no better companion than an old painted woman of quality."

"Surely you cannot mean," returned Pembroke, "that her ladyship was to walk from hence?"

"Without a doubt," cried Shafto, bursting into a horse-laugh: "you would be clever to see my lady Stingy in any other carriage than her clogs."

Irritated at the malice of Miss Dundas, and despising the vulgar illiberality of Shafto, Pembroke, without deigning a reply, abruptly left the room; and hastening out of the house, ran rather than walked, in hopes of overtaking the Countess and her servant before they reached Harrowby.

He crossed the little wooden bridge that lies over the Witham; he scoured the fields; and, leaping every stile and gate which impeded his way, gained the enclosure that leads to the top of the hill, where he descried a light moving, and very rightly conjectured it must be the lanthorn carried by her ladyship's attendant. Another spring over the shattered fence cleared all obstacles; and he found himself close to lady Tinemouth, who was leaning on the arm of a gentleman. Pembroke stopped at this sight; supposing that she had been met by some person belonging to the town; whose readier gallantry now occupied the place which Miss Dundas had prevented him from filling, he was preparing to retreat, when lady Tinemouth happening to turn her head, imagined, from the hesitating embarrassment of his manner, that he was a stranger who had lost his way, and accosted him with that inquiry.

Pembroke bowed in some confusion; and related the simple fact, of his having heard that she had quitted lady Shafto's without any guard but the servant; and, that he had hurried out, the moment he had learned the

circumstance, to proffer his services. The Countess not only thanked him for such attention, but, constrained by a civility which she would rather at that instant have been excused from, asked him to walk forward with her to the abbey, and partake of some refreshment.

"But," added she, "though I perfectly recollect having seen another gentleman in lady Shafto's room, besides Doctor Denton, I have not the honour of knowing your name?"

"It is Somerset," returned Pembroke: "I am the son of that lady Somerset, who, during the last year of her life, had the happiness of being intimate with your ladyship."

Lady Tinemouth declared her pleasure at this meeting; and, turning to the gentleman who was walking in silence by her side, "Mr. Constantine," said she, "allow me to introduce to you the cousin of the amiable Miss Beaufort."

Thaddeus, who had too well recognized the voice of his false friend, in the first accents, which he addressed to the Countess, with a swelling heart, bent his head to the cold salutation of Somerset. Hearing that her ladyship's companion was no other than the same Constantine whom he had liberated from prison, Pembroke was stimulated with a desire to unmask his double villainy to lady Tinemouth; and, feeling a curiosity to see the man whose person and meretricious qualities had blinded even the judgment of his aunt; he readily obeyed the second invitation of the Countess, and consented to go home and sup with her.

Meanwhile, Thaddeus was agitated with a variety of emotions. Every tone of Pembroke's voice, reminding him of happier days, pierced to his heart, whilst a sense of his ingratitude, awakened all the pride and indignation of his soul. Full of resentment, he determined that whatever might be the result, he would not shrink from an interview, the anticipation of which, Pembroke (who had received from himself an intimation of the name that he had assumed) seemed to regard with such unfeeling indifference.

Lady Tinemouth, having no conception that Somerset and the Count had any personal knowledge of each other, begged the gentlemen to follow her into the supper-parlour. Pembroke, with no inconsiderable degree of rude

pushed by his friend, and arrived at the side of the
tess, before Thaddeus, who felt himself insulted in
nerve, could summon coolness to enter the room
a composed step. He did so; and, taking off his
aid it down on the sofa. Lady Tinemouth began
press her joy at his arrival. The eyes of Pembroke
became fixed on the calm but severe countenance of
an before him: he stood by the table with an air
ll of princely greatness, that the candid heart of
roke Somerset soon whispered to him, "*Sure noth-
can dwell in such a breast!*"
l his eyes followed him, when he turned round,
hen he bent his head to answer the Countess, in
e so low, that it escaped his ear. Pembroke was
lered. There was something in the features, in
ien, of this foreigner, so like his friend Sobieski!
hen, Sobieski was all frankness and animation;
eek blazed with the rich colouring of youth and
ness; his eyes flashed pleasure, and his lips were
d with smiles. On the reverse, the person before
as not only considerably taller, and of more man-
oportions, but his face was pale, reserved, and
ity; besides, he did not appear even to recollect
ame of Somerset; and, what made the supposition
e untenable, his own was Constantine.
se reasonings having passed through the mind of
roke in less time than they can be repeated, left
art unsatisfied. The mounted blood remained on
eeks; his bosom beat; and keeping his searching
rdent gaze riveted on the man who was either his
or his counterpart, lady Tinemouth withdrew
he table, and the eyes of the two young men met.
leus turned paler than before: there is an intelli-
in the interchange of looks which cannot be mis-
; it is the communication of souls, and there is no
tion in their language. Pembroke flew forward,
atching hold of his friend's hand, exclaimed in an
uous voice, "Am I right? Are you not Sobieski?"
am," returned Thaddeus, half choaked with emo-
and hardly knowing what to understand by So-
t's behaviour.
racious Heaven!" cried he, still grasping his
"*and can* you have forgotten your friend Pem-
Somerset?"

The ingenuous heart of Thaddeus felt the words
manner of Pembroke to be the language of truth;
trusting that some mistake had involved his former
duct, he at once cast off all suspicion; and, thro
his arms round him, strained him to his breast,
burst into tears.

"Yes;" replied Pembroke, turning to the Cou
and wiping away the tears that trembled on his c
"nothing could have given me pain at this mo
but the conviction that he who was the preserver
life, and my most generous protector; should, in
country, have endured the most abject distress, r
than let me know, that it was in my power to be
ful."

Thaddeus took out his handkerchief, and for
minutes concealed his face. The Countess looke
him with tenderness; believing that he would
regain composure were he alone with his friend
stole unobserved out of the room. Pembroke affe
ately resumed: "But, I hope, dear Sobieski, tha
will never leave me more. I have an excellent f
who, when made acquainted with my obligations t
and your noble family, will glory in loving you
son."

Thaddeus having subdued *the woman in his*
raised his head with an expression in his eyes, fa
ferent from that which had chilled the blood of Pem
on their first encounter.

"Circumstances," said he, "dear Somerset,
made me greatly injure you. A strange neglect o
side since we separated at Villanow, gave the firs
to my confidence in your friendship. Though
your direct address, I had written to you often,
yet you persevered in silence. When I came to En
after having witnessed the destruction of all tha
dear to me in Poland, and then of Poland itself, I
ed to give your faithfulness another chance; I add
two letters to you; I even delivered the last at
door myself, and I saw you in the window when
it in."

"By all that is sacred," cried Pembroke vehem
and amazed, "I never saw any letter from you! I
you many. I never heard of those you mention
deed, I should even now have been ignorant of th

aline's, and your mother's cruel fate, had it not been too circumstantially related in the newspapers."

"I believe you," returned Thaddeus, drawing an agonizing sigh, at the dreadful picture which the last sentence had recalled; "I believe you; though at the time I speak of, I thought otherwise; for, next day, both my letters were re-enclosed in a blank cover, directed as if by your hand, and brought by a servant with a message that there was no answer."

"Powers of Heaven!" exclaimed Somerset, "there must be some villainy in this! Dearest Thaddeus!" cried he, breaking off abruptly, and grasping his hand, "I would have flown to you, had it been to meet my death! But why did you not come in yourself? Who prevented you? Then no mistake could have happened. Why did you not come in yourself?"

"Because, I was uncertain of your sentiments: my first letter had remained unnoticed, and my heart, dear Somerset," added he, pressing his hand, "would not stoop to solicitation."

"Solicitation!" exclaimed Pembroke with warmth, "You have a right to demand my life! But there is some rascally business in this affair; nothing else could have carried it through: if any of my servants have dared to open these letters——Merciful heaven," cried he, interrupting himself, "how you must have despised me!"

"I was afflicted," returned Thaddeus, "that the man whom my family had so warmly loved, could prove so unworthy; and, afterwards, whenever I met you in the streets, which I think was once or twice, I confess, to pass you cut me to the heart."

"And you have met me!" exclaimed Pembroke, "and I not see you! I cannot comprehend it."

"Yes," answered Thaddeus, "and the first time was going into the play-house. I believe I called after you."

"It is now ten months since!" returned Pembroke; "I remember very well, that somebody called out my name, while I was handing lady Coningsby and her sister into the door. I looked about, and not seeing any one I knew, thought I must have been mistaken. *But why, dear Sobieski*, why did you not follow me into the theatre?"

Thaddeus shook his head, and smiling languidly;

"My poverty would not permit me," replied he, "but I waited in the hall till every body had left the house, in hopes of intercepting you as you passed."

Pembroke sprung from his chair at these last words; and, with the most vehement voice and action, exclaimed, "I see it! That rascal Loftus, is at the bottom of it all! He followed me into the theatre, he must have seen you, and his cursed selfishness took fright. Yes, it must be him! He would not allow me to return that way; when I said I would, he told me a thousand lies about the carriages coming round; and, like a fool, I went out by another door."

"Who is Mr. Loftus?" inquired Thaddeus, surprised at his friend's suspicion; "I do not know such a man."

"What," returned Pembroke, walking about the room in a heat, "don't you remember, that Loftus is the name of the scoundrel who persuaded me to volunteer against Poland? to screen his baseness, I have brought all this upon myself."

"Now, I recollect it; replied Thaddeus, "but I never saw him."

"Yet, I am not less certain that I am right," replied Somerset; "I will recount to you my reasons. After I had quitted Villanow, you remember I met him at Dantzic? Before we left that port, he implored, almost on his knees, that in pity to his mother and sisters, whom he supported out of his salary, I would refrain from incensing my parents against him, by relating any circumstance of our visit to Poland. The man shed tears as he spoke; and, like a fool, I consented to keep the secret, till the vicar of Somerset (a poor soul, ill of the dropsy) dies, and he be in possession of the living. when we landed in England," continued Pembroke, casting down his eyes; "I found that the cause of my sudden recall, was the illness of my dear mother. But heaven denied me the comfort of beholding her again: she had been buried two days before I reached the shore." He paused for a moment; and then resumed, "For near a month after my return, I could not quit my room; a fever had seized me; but, on my recovery, I immediately wrote, both to you and the Palatine. I repeated these letters at least every six weeks during the first year of our separation; yet you persisted in being si-

lent. Hurt as I was at this neglect, I felt that gratitude demanded some sacrifices from pride, and I continued to write, even into the spring following. Meanwhile, the papers of the day teemed with Sobieski's actions, Sobieski's fame; and believing that increasing glory had blotted me out of your memory, I resolved, henceforth to regard our friendship as a dream, and never to speak of it more."

Confounded at this double misapprehension, Thaddeus, with a glowing countenance, expressed his regret for having doubted his friend; and, repeating the assurance of having been punctual to his promise of correspondence, even when he deemed him inconstant; acknowledged, that nothing short of a premeditated scheme could have wrought such undeviating miscarriage.

"Aye;" returned Pembroke, reddening with awakened anger; "I could swear that Mr. Loftus has all my letters in his bureau at this moment! No house ever gave a man a better opportunity to play the rogue in, than ours. It is a custom with us to lay our letters in a morning on the hall table, whence they are sent to the office; and, in the same way when the post arrives, they are spread out, for their several owners to take as they pass to breakfast. Owing to this management, I cannot doubt the means by which Mr. Loftus, under the hope of separating us for ever, has intercepted every letter to you, and every letter from you. I suppose, the wretch feared that I would repent my engagement, if our correspondence were allowed. He trembled, lest the business should be blown before the vicar died, and he in consequence, lose both the expected living, and his present situation about Lord Arun. A villain! For once he has judged rightly; I will unmask him to my father, and shew him what it is to purchase subsistence at the expense of honour and justice."

Thaddeus, who could not withhold instant credence to these evidences of chicanery, tried to calm the violence of his friend: who only answered, by insisting on his immediate return with him to Somerset castle.

"I long to present you to my father;" cried Pembroke, "when I tell him who you are; of your kindness to me; how rejoiced will he be! How happy, how proud to have you as his guest; to shew the warm gratitude of a Briton's heart! Indeed Sobieski, you will love him;

for he is generous and noble, like your inestimable grandfather. Besides," added he, smiling with a sudden recollection, "there is my lovely cousin Mary; who, I verily believe, will actually fly int your arms!"

Thaddeus felt the blood rush over his cheeks at this speech of his friend's, and half suppressing a sigh, he shook his head.

"Don't look so like an infidel," resumed Somerset. "If you have any doubts of possessing her affections, I can put you out of your pain by a single sentence! When lady Dundas's household, with myself amongst them (for little did I know that I was joining the cry against my friend! were asserting the most flagrant instances of your deceit to Euphemia, Mary alone, withstood the whole tide of malice, and compelled me to release you."

"Gracious Providence!" cried Thaddeus, catching Pembroke's hand, and looking eagerly and agitatedly in his face, "Was it you who came to my prison? Was it Miss Beaufort who visited my lodgings?

"Indeed, it was," returned his friend, "and I blush for myself, that I quitted Newgate without an interview. Had I followed the dictates of common decency, I should have seen you; and then, what pain would have been spared my dear cousin! What a joyful surprise would have awaited myself!"

Thaddeus could only reply by pressing his friends hand. His brain whirled. He could not decide on the nature of his feelings; one moment he would have given worlds to throw himself at Miss Beaufort's feet, and the next, he trembled at the prospect of meeting her so soon.

"Dear Sobieski," cried Pembroke, "how strangely you receive this intelligence! Is it possible, that the love of Mary Beaufort can be rejected?"

"No," cried the Count, looking up, his fine face flushed with emotion; "I adore Miss Beaufort. Her virtues possess my whole heart. But can I forget, that I have only that heart to offer? Can I forget that I am a beggar? That even now, I exist on her bounty" The eyes of Thaddeus, and the sudden tremor which shook his frame, finished this appeal to his fate.

Pembroke felt it enter his soul. To hide its effect he threw himself on his friend's breast; and exclaimed,

"Do not injure me and my father, by these sentiments! You are some, dearest Sobieski, to a second home. Sir Robert Somerset will consider himself ennobled in supplying the place of your lamented grandfather!—and my cousin Mary, as you love her, shall bind us still closer; you must be my relation, as well as my friend!"

Thaddeus replied with animated acknowledgment of Pembroke's affection,—"But," added he, "I must not allow the generous spirit of my dear Somerset, to believe, that I can live a dependant on any power but the author of my being. I consider nothing so degrading as an existence wasted in idleness; therefore, if Sir Robert Somerset will assist me to procure some honest means of acquiring support, I shall thank him from my soul. In no other way, my kindest friend, can I ever be brought to tax the gratitude of your father."

Pembroke coloured at this, and exclaimed in a voice of displeasure, "Gracious Heaven, Sobieski, what can you mean? Do you imagine, that ever my father or myself can forget that you were little less than a prince in your own country? That when in that high station, you treated me like a brother? That you preserved me, even when I lifted my arm against your life? Can we be such monsters, as to forget all this? or think that we act justly by you, in permitting you to labour for your bread? No, Thaddeus, my very soul spurns at the idea. Your mother sheltered me as a son; and I insist that you allow my father to perform the same part by you! Besides, you shall not be idle; you may have a commission in the army, and I will follow you."

The Count squeezed the hand of his friend, and looking gratefully in his face whilst he shook his head, replied, "Had I a hundred tongues, my generous Pembroke, I could not express my sense of your friendship; it is indeed a cordial to my heart; it imparts to me an earnest of happiness which I thought had fled me for ever: but, it shall not allure me from my principles. I am resolved not to live a life of indolence; and I am resolved, not at this period, to enter the British army. No," added he, emotion elevating his tone and manner; "rather would I toil for subsistence by the sweat of my brow, *than be subjected* to the necessity of acting in *concert with those* ravagers who destroyed my country! *I cannot fight by the* side of the Russians! I cannot

inlist under their allies! I will not be led out to devastation! Mine was, and ever shall remain, a defensive sword: and should danger threaten England, I shall be as ready to withstand her enemies, as I ardently, though ineffectually, opposed those of unhappy Poland."

Pembroke recognized the high-souled Thaddeus of Warsaw, in this lofty burst of enthusiasm; aware that his father's munificence, and manner of conferring esteem and obligations, would go father towards removing these scruples of delicacy than all his arguments; he did not attempt to combat a resolution which he knew he could not subdue; but tried to prevail on him to become his guest, till something could be arranged to suit his wishes.

Thaddeus consented to accompany Somerset to the castle the day after the one in which Sir Robert should be apprised of his coming. Pembroke perceived that the morning had surprised them; and shaking his friend warmly by the hand, he bade him farewell; then hastening down the hill, he arrived at the lodge, just as the servants were opening the shutters.

Having given orders to the groom whom he met in the passage, he wrote a slight apology to Shafto for his abrupt departure; and, mounting his horse, gallopped full of delight towards Somerset castle.

CHAPTER III.

Next morning, when the Countess and Thaddeus were seated at breakfast, her ladyship expressed surprise and pleasure at the scene which she had witnessed the preceding night, at the same time intimating some mortification on the discovery, that he had withheld any of his confidence from her. Sobieski soon obtained her ladyship's pardon, by relating the manner of his first meeting with Mr. Somerset, four years ago at the battle of Zielime, and the consequent events of that momentous period.

Lady Tinemouth wept over the distressful fate that marked the residue of his narrative, with a tenderness which endeared her to his soul. But when, in compliance with his enquiries, she informed him how the

came to be at Harrowby Abbey when he supposed her on the Wolds; it was his turn to feel pity; and to shrink from himself, that he had drawn existence from the same source with lord Harwold.

"Indeed," added the Countess, "you must have had a most tedious journey from Harwold Park to Harrowby; and nothing but my pleasure could exceed my astonishment, when I met you last night on the hill."

Thaddeus declared that travelling a few miles farther than he had intended, was no fatigue to him; yet had it been otherwise, the happiness he then enjoyed would have acted as a panacea for worse ills, could he have seen her ladyship looking as well as when she left London.

Lady Tinemouth smiled. "You are very right, Sobieski; I am worse than when I was in town. My solitary journey to Harwold harrassed me much; and when my son sent me orders to leave it, because his father wanted the place for the autumnal months, I was labouring under a severe cold caught in travelling. Nevertheless, I obeyed him; and, heart-broken and in pain, I arrived here last week. How kind you were to follow me. Who informed you of the place of my destination? Hardly any of lady Sophia's household?"

"No," returned Thaddeus; "I luckily had the precaution to inquire at the inn where the coach stopped, what part of Lord Tinemouth's family were at the Park; and when I heard that the Earl himself was there, my next question was, where then is the Countess? The landlord very civilly told me of your having had a carriage from his house a day or two before, to carry you to one of his lordship's seats, within a few miles of Somerset castle. Hence, from what I had heard your ladyship say of the situation of Harrowby, I judged it must be the abbey; and so I sought you at a venture."

"And a happy issue I hope will arise from your wanderings!" returned her ladyship, "This rencontre with so old a friend as Mr. Somerset, is a pleasing omen. For my part, I was ignorant of the arrival of the family at the castle, till yesterday morning, when I sent off a messenger to apprise my dear Miss Beaufort, that I am in her neighbourhood. To my great dissatisfaction, lady Shafto found me out immediately; and when, in compliance with her teizing invitation, I walked down to sit an hour with her last night, little did I expect

that I should meet the amiable cousin of our sweet friend. So delightful an accident has amply repaid me for the pain I felt in seeing Miss Dundas in her ladyship's house: an insolent and reproachful letter which she wrote to me on your account, has rendered her an object of my most decided dislike."

Thaddeus smiled and bowed. "Since, my dear lady Tinemouth, her groundless malice, and Miss Euphemia's folly, have failed in estranging either your confidence or the esteem of Miss Beaufort from me, I despise and pardon them both. Perhaps I ought to pity them, for it is not a difficult ordeal, to pass through the enchantments of wealth and adulation, and emerge as pure as when we entered them? Unclouded fortune, is indeed a trial of spirits; and how brightly does Miss Beaufort rise from the blaze! Surrounded by splendour, homage, and indulgence, she is yet all nature, gentleness, and virtue!"

The Countess, who wished to appear cheerful, rallied him on the warmth of his expressions; then rising from her seat, she left him to his meditations, and retired to dress.

The family at Somerset had just drawn round the breakfast table, when Pembroke arrived. During the repast, they expressed their surprise at the suddenness of his return. Mary, after repeating the contents of the note which she had received the preceding day from lady Tinemouth, requested that her cousin would be kind enough to drive her in his curricle that morning to Harrowby.

"I will, with pleasure," answered he: "I have seen her ladyship, and even supped with her last night."

"How came that?" asked Miss Dorothy.

"I shall explain it to my father, whenever he will honour me with an audience," returned he, addressing the baronet, with all the joy of his heart looking out at his eyes; "will you indulge me, my dear sir, by half an hour's attention, any time before noon?"

"Certainly," replied Sir Robert; "at present I am going into my study, where I must settle my steward's books; but the moment I have finished, I will send for you."

Miss Dorothy walked out after her brother to attend to her aviary; and Mary remaining alone with

her cousin, made some inquiries about the Countess's reasons for coming to the abbey.

"I know nothing about them," replied he gayly, "for she went to bed almost the instant I entered her house. Too good to remain where her company was not wanted, she left me to enjoy a most delightful *tete-a-tete* with a dear friend, from whom I parted four years ago. In short, we sat up the whole night together, talking over past scenes, and present ones too, for I assure you, you were not forgotten."

"Me! What had I to do with it?" replied Mary, smiling, "I cannot recollect any friend of yours that you have not seen these four years."

"Well, that is strange!" answered Pembroke, "he remembers you perfectly; but true to your sex, you affirm what you please; though I know that there is not a man in the world whom you prefer before him."

Mary shook her head, laughed, and sighed, and extricating her hand from his, threatened to leave him if he would not be serious.

"I am serious," cried he, catching her arm, and pulling her back to her seat; "Would you have me swear that I have seen him you most wish to see?"

Mary regarded the expression of his countenance with a thrill, which vanished as soon as felt; and resuming her chair, quietly said, "You can have seen no man that is of consequence to me; so, whoever your friend may be, I have only to congratulate you on a meeting which affords you such extreme delight."

Pembroke burst into a laugh at her composure. "So cold, Mary?" cried he, "So cautious! Yet I verily believe you would answer my transports, did I tell you who he is. However, you are such a sceptic, that I won't hint even one of the many fine things he said about you."

Mary smiled incredulously.

"I could beat you, cousin," exclaimed he, "for this oblique way of saying that I am telling lies! But I will have my revenge on your curiosity; for, on my honour I declare," added he emphatically, "last night, I met with a friend at lady Tinemouth's, who, four years ago saved my life; who entertained me several weeks in *his house; and*, who has seen, and adores you! 'Tis true, on my hopes of heaven; and I have promised,

that you will repay these heavy obligations, by marrying him. What do you say to this, my sweet Mary?"

Miss Beaufort looked anxious at the serious and energetic manner in which these rapid asseverations were uttered: even the sportive kiss that ended the question, did not dispel the gravity with which she prepared to reply.

Pembroke perceiving her intent, prevented her by exclaiming, "Cease, Mary, cease! I see you are preparing a false statement. Let truth prevail, and you will not deny, that I am suing for a plighted faith? You will not deny who it was that subdued your judgment, to any indulgence? You cannot conceal from me, that the wanderer Constantine possesses your affections?"

Mary reddened with pain and displeasure; and rising from her seat, "I did not expect this cruel, this ungenerous speech from you, Pembroke!" cried she, averting her brimming eyes; What have I done to deserve so rude so unfeeling a reproach?"

Pembroke threw his arm round her waist. "Come," said he in a tender voice, "don't be tragical. I never meant to reproach you, child: I dare say, if you gave your heart, it was only in return for his. I know you are a grateful girl; and, I verily believe, you won't find much difference between my friend the young count Sobieski and the forlorn Constantine."

A suspicion of the truth flashed across Miss Beaufort's mind; unable to speak, she caught hold of her cousin's hands, and looking eagerly in his face, her eyes declared the question she would have asked.

Pembroke laughed triumphantly; but a servant entering to tell him that Sir Robert was ready, he strained her to his breast, and exclaimed, "Now I am revenged! Farewell! I leave you to all the pangs of doubt and curiosity!" He then flew out of the room, with an arch glance at her distressed countenance, and hurried up stairs.

Mary clasped her trembling hands together as the door closed on Pembroke. "O, gracious Providence!" cried she, "What am I to understand by this mystery, this joy of my cousin's? Can it be possible, that the illustrious Sobieski, and my contemned Constantine, are the same?" A burning blush overspread her face and bosom at the expression my which had escaped her lip

Whilst the graces, the sweetness, the dignity of Thaddeus, captivated her notice; his sufferings, his virtues, and the mysterious interest which involved his history, had fixed her attention, and awakened her esteem. From these grounds, the step is short to love. 'When the soul is conquered, the heart surrenders at discretion.' But Mary knew not that she had advanced farther than what rendered retreat possible, till the last scene at Dundas-house, by forcing her to defend Constantine against the charge of loving her, compelled her to feel how much she wished that the truth were otherwise.

Poor and lowly as he seemed, she found that her whole heart and life were wrapped in his remembrance; that his worshipped idea, was her most precious solace, her property, her dear treasure, on which she banqueted in secret. It was the companion of her walks, the monitor of her actions, whenever she planned, whenever she executed, she asked herself, how would Constantine consider this? and accordingly, did she approve or condemn her conduct.

Though separated far from the idol of her memory, thus was the impression which he had stamped on her heart, ever present. The shade of Laura visited the solitude of Vaucluse; the image of Constantine haunted the walks of Somerset. The loveliness of nature; its leafy groves and verdant meadows; its blooming mornings, and luxuriant sunsets; the romantic shadows of twilight, or the soft glories of the moon and stars; all, as they pressed beauty and sentiment upon her heart, awoke it to the remembrance of Constantine; she saw his image in every thing, she felt his soul in all. Subtle, and undefinable, is that etherial chord, which unites our tenderest thoughts with their chain of association!

Before this conversation, in which Pembroke had mentioned the name of Constantine with such badinage and ambiguity, he had never heard him spoken of by Mary or his aunt, without declaring a displeasure nearly amounting to anger. Hence, when he now so strangely altered his tone, Miss Beaufort could not escape retaining the only conclusion which could be drawn; that he had seen in the person of him she most valued, some one whom he loved. Prior to this time, she had more than once suspected from the opinions which Somerset

occasionally repeated respecting the affairs of Poland, that he could only have acquired so nice a knowledge of its events, by having visited the country itself. She proposed her suspicion to Mr. Loftus: he denied the fact; and she thought no more on the subject, till the present ambiguous hints of her cousin, conjured up these doubts anew; and, led her to suppose, that if Pembroke had not disobeyed his father so far as to go to Warsaw, he had at least met with the count Sobieski in some other realm. The possibility that this young hero, of whom fame had spoken so loudly, might be the mysterious Constantine, bewildered and delighted her. The more she compared what she had heard of the one, with what she had witnessed in the other, the more she was reconciled to the probability of so wild a hope. Besides, she could not for a moment believe that her cousin would so cruelly sport with her delicacy and feelings, as to awaken expectations which he could not fulfil.

Agitated by a suspense which bordered on agony, with a beating heart she heard his quick step descending the stairs. The door opened, and Pembroke, flying into the room, caught up his hat: as he was darting away again, Mary, unable to restrain her impatience, with an imploring voice ejaculated his name. He turned round, and displayed to her amazed sight, a countenance in which no vestige of its former animation could be traced; his cheek was flushed; and his eyes full of distraction, shot a wild fire, that immediately struck to her heart. Unconscious what she did, she ran up to him; but Pembroke pushing her back, with parched lips, and in a hurried voice, exclaimed, "Don't ask me any questions, Mary, if you would not drive me to madness."

"O Heaven!" cried she, catching his arm, and clinging to him while the velocity of his motion dragged her into the hall; "tell me, has any thing happened to my guardian? to your friend? to Constantine?"

"No," replied he, looking at her with a face full of desperation; "but my father commands me to treat him like a villain."

Mary could hardly credit her senses, at this confirmation that Constantine and Sobieski were one; turning giddy with the tumultuous delight, which rushed

over her soul, she staggered back a few paces, and, leaning against the now open door, tried to recover breath to regain the room she had left.

Pembroke having escaped from her grasp, ran furiously down the hill, mounted his horse, and, forbidding any groom to attend him, galloped towards the high road with the impetuosity of a madman. All the powers of his soul were in arms. He felt himself wounded, dishonoured, stigmatized with ingratitude, and every baseness, which can degrade the mind of man.

Sir Robert Somerset had founded a hatred of the Poles and Hungarians, on the recollection of an injury which he had received in early youth from some of those people. In this instance his dislike was implacable; and when his son set out for the Continent, he positively forbade him to enter either Poland or Hungary. Nevertheless, when Pembroke joined the Baronet in his library, he did it with confidence. With a bounding heart and animated countenance, he recapitulated how he had been wrought up by the Russian noblemen, to take up arms in their cause and march into Poland. At these last words, the brow of his father contracted.

Pembroke, who expected some marks of displeasure, hastened to obliterate his disobedience, by narrating the event which introduced, not only the young count Sobieski to his succour, but the consequent friendship of the whole of that princely family.

Sir Robert made no other reply to this, than by a deeper frown; and, when Pembroke, with all the ardour of youth, attempted to describe the calamitous death of the Palatine, the horrors that attended the last hours of the Countess, and the succeeding misery of Thaddeus, who was now in England, no language can paint the rage which burst at once from the Baronet. He stamped on the ground, he covered his face with his clenched hands; then turning on his son with the most tremendous fury, he exclaimed, "Pembroke! You have outraged my commands! And never will I pardon you, if this young man be ever brought into my sight."

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Pembroke, thunder-struck at a violence, which he almost wished might proceed from any cause but intention; "Surely nothing has agitated my father! What has discomposed you, Sir?"

Sir Robert shook his head, whilst his teeth appeared to grind against each other. "Don't mistake me," replied he in a firm voice, "I am perfectly in my senses. It depends on *you* that I shall continue so. You know my oath against these accursed Polanders; and, I repeat again, if you ever bring that young man into my sight, you shall never see *me* more."

A cold dew overspread the body of Pembroke. He would have caught hold of his father's hand, but he held it back. "Oh, Sir!" said he, "You surely cannot intend that I shall treat with ingratitude the man who saved my life?"

Sir Robert did not vouchsafe him an answer, but continued walking up and down the room, till his agitation seeming to encrease at every step, he opened the door of an interior apartment, and retired, bidding his son remain.

The horror-struck Pembroke waited for near a quarter of an hour before his father re-entered. When he did appear, the deep gloom of his eye gave no encouragement to his son, who, hanging down his head, recoiled from speaking first. Sir Robert approached with a composed but severe countenance, and said, "I have been seeking every palliation that your conduct will admit, but I can find none. Before you quitted England, you knew well my abhorrence of the Polish nation. One of that country, many years ago, wounded my happiness in a way that I shall never recover. From that hour, I took an oath, never to enter its borders; and never to suffer one of its people to come within my doors. Rash, disobedient boy! You know my disposition, and you have seen the emotion with which this dilemma has shaken my soul! But, be it on your own head: you have incurred obligations which I cannot repay. I will not perjure myself to defray a debt contracted against my positive and declared principles. I never will see this Polander you speak of; and, it is my express command, on pain of my eternal malediction, that you break with him entirely."

Pembroke, with a deep groan, fell into a seat. Sir Robert proceeded.

"I pity your distress, Pembroke, but my resolution *cannot* be shaken. Oaths are not to be broken with impunity. You must either resign him, or resign me.—

We may compromise your debt of gratitude; I will give you deeds to put your friend in possession of five hundred a year for life, for ever; but, from the hour in which you tell him so you must never see him more."

Sir Robert was preparing to quit the room; when Pembroke, starting from his chair, threw himself in agony on his knees, and catching by the skirt of his coat, implored him for God's sake, to recall his words; to remember, that he was affixing everlasting dishonour on his son! "Remember, dear Sir! cried he, holding his struggling hand, "that the man to whom you offer money as a compensation for insult, is of a nature too noble to receive it. He will reject it, and spurn me; and I shall feel that I deserve his scorn. For mercy's sake, spare me the agony of harrowing up the heart of my preserver; of meeting reproach from his eyes!"

"Leave me!" cried the Baronet, breaking from him; "I repeat, unless you wish to incur my curse, do as I have commanded."

Thus outraged, thus agonized, Pembroke had appeared before the eyes of his cousin Mary, more like a distracted creature, than a man possessed of his senses. Shortly after his abrupt departure, her apprehension was petrified to a dreadful certainty of some cruel ruin to her hopes, by an order which she received in the hand-writing of her uncle, commanding her not to attempt visiting lady Tinemouth, whilst the count Sobieski continued to be her guest.

Hardly knowing whither he went, Pembroke did not arrive at the ruined aisle which leads up to the habitable part of the abbey, till near three o'clock. He inquired of the servant who took his horse, whether the Countess and Mr. Constantine were at home. The man replied in the affirmative; but added with a saddened countenance, that he feared neither of them could be seen.

"For what reason?" demanded Somerset.

"Alas! Sir," replied the servant, "this day at noon, whilst my lady was dressing, she was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which ended in the rupture of a blood vessel. It continued to flow so long, that Mr. Constantine told the apothecary whom he had summoned, to send for Dr. Cavendish, a physician of his acquaintance, who is now at Stamford. The Doctor is

not yet arrived, and Mr. Constantine will not leave my lady."

Though Mr. Somerset was truly concerned at the illness of the Countess, the respite it afforded him from immediately declaring the ungrateful message of Sir Robert, gave him no inconsiderable degree of ease.—Some little relieved by the hope of being for one day spared the anguish of displaying his father in a disgraceful light, he entered the abbey; and commissioned a maid-servant to inform Thaddeus that he was below.

In a few minutes the girl returned with the following lines scrawled on a piece of paper.

"I am grieved that I cannot see my dear Somerset to-day; and more grieved for the cause: I fear my revered friend is on her death-bed. I have sent for Dr. Cavendish, who is now at Stamford; doubtless you know that he is a man of first rate abilities: if human skill could preserve her, I might yet have hopes; but her disorder is a consumption, and its stroke is sure. I am now sitting by her bed-side, and writing what she dictates, to her husband, her son, and her daughter: painful, you may believe is the task! I cannot, my dear Somerset, add more, than my hope of seeing you soon, and that you will join in prayers to heaven for the restoration of my inestimable friend, with your faithful

SOBIESKI."

"Alas! unhappy, persecuted Sobieski!" thought Pembroke, as he closed the paper; "To what art thou doomed! Some friends are torn from thee by death; others, desert thee in the hour of trouble!"

He took out his pencil, to answer this distressing epistle, but he stopped at the first word: he durst not write that his father would fulfil any one of those engagements which he had so largely promised; and, throwing away the pencil and the paper, he left a verbal declaration of his sorrow at what had happened, and an assurance of calling next day. Turning his back on a house which he had left in the morning with such animating hopes, he re-mounted his horse, and, melancholy and slow, rode about the country till evening; so unwilling was he to return to that home, which now threatened him with the frowns of his father, the tears of Mary Beaufort, and the miserable reflections of his own wretched heart.

CHAPTER IV.

Doctor Cavendish not having quitted his friend at Stamford, set off for Harrowby by the instant Mr. Constantine's messenger arrived; and, before midnight alighted at the abbey.

When he entered lady Tinemouth's chamber, he found her ladyship supported in the arms of Thaddeus, and struggling with a second rupture of her lungs, which seemed to threaten immediate dissolution. As he approached the bed, Thaddeus turned his eyes on him with an expression that powerfully told his fears. Dr. Cavendish silently squeezed his hand; then taking from his pocket some styptic drops which he had brought on purpose, he made the Countess swallow them, and soon saw that they succeeded in stopping the blood.

Thaddeus and his friend remained by the side of the suffering lady Tinemouth till towards ten in the morning, when she sunk into a gentle sleep. Complete stillness being necessary to continue this repose, the Doctor proposed leaving a maid to watch by her ladyship; and drawing the Count out of the room, descended the stairs.

Mr. Somerset, who had been arrived half an hour, met them in the breakfast parlour. After a few kind words exchanged between the parties, they all sat down with dejected countenances to their melancholy meal. Thaddeus was too much absorbed in the scene he had left, to swallow any thing but a dish of coffee.

"Do you think lady Tinemouth is in imminent danger?" inquired Pembroke of the Doctor.

Dr. Cavendish sighed, and turning to Thaddeus, directed to him the answer which his friend's question had demanded. "I am afraid, my dear Mr. Constantine," said he, in a reluctant voice; "that you are to sustain a new trial! I really fear, that her ladyship cannot live eight-and-forty hours."

Thaddeus threw down his eyes and shuddered, but made no reply. Further remarks were prevented by a messenger from the Countess, who desired Mr. Constantine's immediate attendance at her ladyship's bedside. He obeyed. In half an hour he returned with the tears yet wet on his cheek.

"Dear Thaddeus!" cried Pembroke, rising and taking his hand, "I trust the Countess is not worse? This emotion of your's is too distressing: it afflicts my very heart." Pembroke felt that it rent it; for he could not help internally acknowledging, that when Sobieski should close the eyes of lady Tinemouth, he would be paying the last sad office to his last friend. That dear distinction he durst no longer arrogate to himself. Denied the fulfilment of its duties, he felt, that to retain the title, would be an assumption without a right.

Thaddeus drew his hand over his again brimming eyes; "The Countess herself," said he, "feels the truth of what Dr. Cavendish told us. She sent for me to beg, as I loved her, or would wish to see her die in peace, to devise some means of bringing her daughter to the abbey to night. As for lord Harwold, she says, his behaviour since he arrived at manhood, has been of a nature so cruel and unnatural, that she would not draw on herself the misery or him the added guilt, of a refusal: for lady Albina, who has been quiescent in all their barbarities, she trusts, she might be prevailed on to seek a last embrace from a dying parent. It is this request," added Thaddeus, "that has thus agitated me. When she pictured to me, with all the fervour of a mother, her doating fondness for this daughter, (on whom, whenever she did venture to hope, all her fairy dreams had rested;) when she wrung my hands, and beseeched me, as if I had been the sole disposer of her fate, to let her see her child before she died; I could only promise every exertion to effect it; and, with an aching heart, I came to consult you."

Dr. Cavendish was opening his lips to speak; but Somerset, in his eagerness to relieve his friend, did not perceive it, and immediately answered; "I will undertake this very hour what you have promised. I know that lord Tinemouth's family are now at the Wold. It is only thirty miles distant. I will send a servant, to have relays of horses ready. My curricle, which is at the door, will be more convenient than a chaise; and I will engage to be back before to-morrow morning. Write a letter, Thaddeus," continued he, "to lady Albina; tell her of her mother's situation; and, though I have never seen her ladyship, I will give it into her own hand, and carry her off directly, even were it in the face of her rascally father."

The pale cheeks of Thaddeus were flushed with a momentary hectic; turning to Dr. Cavendish, he begged him to write, whilst he walked out with his friend to order the carriage. Pembroke was thanked for his zeal, but it was not by words; they are too weak vehicles to convey strong feelings; Thaddeus pressed his hand, and accompanied the action with a look that spoke vulumes. The warm heart of Pembroke, expanding under the animated gratitude of his friend: He sprung into his seat, and forgot till he had lost sight of Harrowby Hill, how soon he must appear to that friend the most ungrateful of men.

It was near four in the afternoon, before Mr. Somerset left his curricle at the little inn which skirts the village of Harthorpe. The paling belonging to lord Tinemouth's park, was only a few yards distant; but, fearful of being observed, Pembroke sought a more obscure part; and, scaling a wall covered by the branches of high trees, he found a way to the house through an almost impassible thicket.

He watched two hours for the appearance of lady Albina, (whose youth and elegance he thought would unequivocally distinguish her from the rest of the Earl's household) but in vain, Desponding of success, he was preparing to change his station, when he heard a sound among the withered leaves, and the next moment, a beautiful young creature passed the bush behind which he was concealed. The fine symmetry of her profile, assured him that she must be the daughter of lady Tinemouth. She stooped to gather a china-aster: Pembroke, knowing that no time ought to be lost, gently emerged from his recess; but not so stilly as to escape the ear of lady Albina, who instantly looking round, screamed, and would have fled, had he not thrown himself before her, and exlcaimed, "Stay, lady Albina! For heaven's sake, stay! I come from your mother!"

Her ladyship gazed fearfully in his face, and tried to release her hand which he had seized to prevent her flight.

"Do not be alarmed;" continued he, "no harm is intended you. I am the son of Sir Robert Somerset, and the friend of your mother, who is now on the point of death. She implores to see you this night, (for she

has hardly an hour to live,) to hear from your own lips, that you do not hate her."

Lady Albina, now wholly given up to his relation, trembled dreadfully; and, with faded cheeks, and quivering lips, replied, "Hate my mother! O, no! I have ever dearly loved her!"

A flood of tears prevented her speaking further; and Pembroke perceiving that he had gained her confidence, put the Doctor's letter into her hand. The gentle heart of lady Albina bled at every word which her almost blinded eyes read over; turning to Pembroke, who stood contemplating her lovely countenance with the deepest interest, she said, "Pray, Mr. Somerset, take me immediately to my mother. If she were to die before I can arrive, I shall be made miserable for life. Alas! alas! I have never been allowed to behold her! Never been allowed to visit London, because my father knew that I believed my poor mother innocent, and would have seen her, if it were possible."

Lady Albina wept violently as she spoke, and giving her hand to Pembroke, added, timidly looking round to the house, "You must take me now. We must hasten away, in case we should be surprised. If lady Sophia were to know that I have been speaking with any body out of the family, I should be locked up for months

Pembroke did not require a second command from his beautiful charge, but conducting her through the unfrequented paths by which he had entered, soon seated her in his curricle: he sheltered her delicate form with his great coat, and tied down her straw hat with his cambric handkerchief; then whipping his horses, set off on full gallop, towards the melancholy goal of his enterprise.

The tender lady Albina, whose ingenuous mind had ever been proof against the malicious insinuations of lady Sophia to the prejudice of lady Tinemouth, sat by the side of Mr. Somerset, sometimes mute with sorrow; sometimes lamenting, with all the artless eloquence of nature, the injuries of her dying parent, and her own unhappiness, in having been so long withheld from paying duty, where she owed so much affection.

Whilst these two anxious travellers were pursuing their sad journey, the inhabitants of the abbey were

distracted with apprehension that the Countess would expire before their arrival Ever since lady Tinemouth had been informed that Mr. Somerset was gone to the Wold, hope and fear agitated her almost to suffocation; at length, wearied out with solicitude and expectation, she turned her dim eyes upon Thaddeus, and forcing a smile, said, in a languid voice, "My dear friend, it must be near midnight. I shall never see the morning; I shall never in this world see my child. I pray you, thank Mr. Somerset for all the trouble I have occasioned; and my daughter, my Albina!" added her ladyship, hardly able to articulate; "Oh! Father of mercies!" cried she, holding up her clasped hands, "pour all thy blessings on her head, she has never wilfully given this broken heart a pang!"

The Countess had hardly ended speaking, when Thaddeus heard a bustle on the stairs; suspecting that it might be the arrival of his friend, he made a sign to Dr. Cavendish to go and inquire. His heart beat violently, whilst he kept his eye fixed on the door, and held the fainting pulse of lady Tinemouth in his hand. The doctor re-entered, and, in a low voice, whispered, "Lady Albina is here."

The words acted like magic on the fading senses of the Countess; with preternatural strength she started from her pillow, and catching hold of Sobieski's arm with both hers, cried, "Oh! give her to me, whilst I have life!"

Lady Albina appeared, led in by Pembroke; but instantly quitting his hand, with an agonizing shriek she rushed towards the bed, and flung herself into the extended arms of her mother. Those arms closed on her, and the head of the Countess rested on her bosom.

Dr. Cavendish soon perceived, by the struggles of the young lady, that she was in convulsions; taking her off the bed, he consigned her to Pembroke and Thaddeus, who carried her into another apartment: he remained to assist the Countess.

Albina was removed; but the eyes of her amiable and injured mother, were never again unclosed: she had breathed her last sigh in grateful ecstacy on the bosom of her daughter; and Heaven had taken her spotless soul to itself.

Being convinced that the Countess was indeed no

more, the good doctor left her remains in charge with the women, and repairing to the adjoining room, found lady Albina yet senseless, in the arms of his two friends. She was laid on a sofa, and Cavendish was pouring some drops into her mouth, when he descried Thaddeus gliding softly out of the room: desirous to spare him the shock of suddenly seeing the corpse of one whom he loved so dearly, he said, "Stop, Mr. Constantine! I conjure you, do not go into the Countess's room!"

The eyes of Thaddeus turned with quickness on the distressed face of the physician; one glance explained what the doctor durst not speak; and hastily saying, "I shall obey you," he hurried from the chamber.

In the Count's rapid descent from lady Albina's room to the breakfast parlour, he too plainly perceived, by the tears of the servants, that he had now no sorrows to regret but his own. He darted from the clamorous laments of these honest people into the parlour, and shutting the door, threw himself down on a sofa; but rest induced thought, and thought harrowed up his soul. He started from his position; he paced the room in a paroxysm of anguish; he would have given worlds for one tear to relieve his oppressed heart. Ready to suffocate, he threw open a window, and leaned out.

Not a star appeared to light the sky; the wind blew freshly; and, with parched lips, he inhaled it, as the reviving breath of heaven.

He was sitting on the window-seat, with his head leaning against the casement, when Pembroke entered unobserved: walking up to him, he laid his hand upon his arm, and ejaculated, in a tremulous voice, "Thaddeus, dear Thaddeus!"

Thaddeus rose at the well-known sounds; they reminded him that he was not yet alone in the world; and throwing himself upon the bosom of Mr. Somerset, he exclaimed, "Heaven has still reserved thee, my dear Pembroke, to be my comforter! In thy friendship," added he, wiping away the tears which relieved his bursting heart; "I shall find an affection similar with those which are gone for ever: my friend, my brother! *you are the* last cord that binds me to the world."

Pembroke received the embrace of his friend; he felt *his tears* upon his cheek: but he could neither return

the one, nor sympathize with the other. The conviction, that he was soon to sever that cord which bound them to each other; that he was to cut asunder that knot which ought to have united them for ever; that he was to deprive the man who had saved his life, of the only stay of his existence, and abandón him at once to despair! all these ideas struck to his soul; and, grasping the hand of his friend, he gazed at his averted and dejected features, with a look of desperate horror. "Sobieski," cried he, "whatever may happen, never forget, that I swear, I love you dearer than my life! And, when I am forced to abandon my friend, I shall not be long of abandoning what will then be worthless to me."

Not perceiving the phrenzy of eye which accompanied this energetic declaration, Thaddeus gave no other meaning to the words, than believing it to be the mere expressive assurance of affection that the forceful nature of his friend could devise.

The entrance of Dr. Cavendish disturbed the two young men, to whom he immediately communicated the encreased indisposition of lady Albina.

"The shock," said he, "which she has received from the meeting, and death of her mother, has so materially shaken her delicate frame, that I have ordered her to bed, and administered an opiate, which I hope will procure some repose: and you, my dear sir," added he, addressing the Count, "you had better seek a little rest! The stoutest constitution might sink under what you have lately endured. Pray, allow Mr. Somerset and myself to prevail on you, on our own accounts, if not on your own, to retire for half an hour!"

Thaddeus, in disregard of his personal comfort, never infringed on that of others; he felt that he could not sleep: but he knew it would gratify his benevolent friends, to suppose that he did; and accordingly without opposition, he went to a room, and throwing himself on the bed, lay for nearly an hour, ruminating on what had passed. There is an omnipresence in thought, or a velocity producing nearly the same effect, which brings within the short space of a few minutes, the images of many foregoing years. In almost the same moment, Thaddeus pondered on his strange meeting with the *Countess*, her melancholy story, her forlorn death-bed, *the fatal secret* that her vile husband and son were in

father and brother; and her daughter, whom his warm heart acknowledged as a sister, was with him under the same roof, and, like him, the innocent inheriter of her father's shame.

Whilst these multifarious and painful meditations were agitating his perturbed mind, Dr. Cavendish found repose on a couch, and Pembroke Somerset, every instant feeling greater abhorrence to his ungrateful task, resolved once more to try the influence of entreaty on the otherwise generous spirit of his father. With a half hoping, half desponding heart, he commenced his last attempt, to shake, if possible, so fatal a resolution:

"*To Robert Somerset, Bart. Somerset Castle.*

"I have not ventured into the presence of my dear father, since he uttered those dreadful words, which I would give up my existence to believe I had never heard. You denounce a curse upon me, if I oppose your will to immediately break all connexion with the man who preserved my life. When I think on this; when I remember that it was from *you* I received a command so inexplicable in yourself, so disgraceful to me, I am nearly mad; and what I shall be, should you, by repeating your injunction, force me to obey them, Heaven only knows! but I feel that I cannot survive the loss of my honour, and the sacrifice of my character for every principle of virtue, which such conduct must for ever destroy.

"O, my father! I conjure you! reflect, before, in compliance with an oath, which it was almost guilt to make, you decree your only son to everlasting shame and remorse! Act how I will I shall never be happy more. I cannot live under your malediction; and should I give up my friend, my conscience will reproach me at every instant of my existence. Can I draw that breath which he prolonged, and cease to remember, that I have abandoned him to want and misery? It were vain to flatter myself, that he will condescend to escape either, by the munificence which you offer as a compensation for my friendship. No; I cannot believe that *his sensible* and independent nature is so changed: circumstances never had any power over the nobility of his soul.

"The hand of misfortune, which threw count Sobieski friendless on the bounty of England, cannot make him appear otherwise in my eyes, than as that idol of Warsaw, whose smile was honour, whose friendship conferred distinction. Though deprived "of the splendour of command; though the eager circle of friends no longer cluster round him; though a stranger in this country, and without a home; though in place of an equipage and retinue, he is followed by calamity and neglect; yet, in my mind, I still see him in his car of triumph: I see not only the opposer of his nation's enemies, but the vanquisher of his own desires; I see the heir of a princely house, even when deserted by mankind, yet encompassed by his virtues; I see him, though cast out from a hardened and unjust society, still surrounded by the lingering spirits of those who have fled to better worlds!" And this is the man, my dear father (whom I am sure, had he been of any other country than Poland, you would have selected from all other men, to be the friend and example of your son) this is he, whom you command me to thrust away!

"I beseech you, to reconsider this injunction! I am now writing under the same roof with him: it depends on you, my ever revered father, whether I am doing so for the last time; whether this is the last day in which your son is to feel himself a man of honour; whether he is henceforth to be a wretch overwhelmed with shame and sorrow!

"I have not yet dared to utter one word of what your cruel orders dictated, to my unhappy friend; he is now retired to a room to obtain some rest, after the anguish of witnessing the death of lady Tinemouth, who died this night, in consequence of an illness which only lasted eight-and-forty hours. Should I have to tell him, that he is to lose me too—but I cannot add more. Your own heart, my dear father, must tell you that my soul is on the rack, till I have an answer to this letter.

"Before I shut my paper, let me implore you on my knees! whatever you may decide, do not hate me; do not load my breaking heart with a parent's curse!—Whatever I may be, however low and degraded in my *own eyes, still*, that I have sacrificed what is most precious *to me*, to my father, will impart the only conso-

lation that will then have power to reach your dutiful son, "PEMBROKE SOMERSET.

"*Harrowby Abbey,*
Five o'clock in the morning."

Dr. Cavendish remained in a profound sleep, whilst Pembroke, with an aching heart, having written the above letter, and dispatched it with a man and horse, tried to compose himself, to half an hour's forgetfulness of life and its turmoils; but he found his attempts as ineffectual as those of his friend.

Thaddeus tossed and tumbled on his restless pillow. Reluctant to disturb the Doctor and Somerset, whom he hoped, having less cause for regret, had found that repose which he sought in vain, he remained in bed. He longed for morning. Any change of situation seemed to his irritated nerves, better than the state he was in; and, with some gleams of pleasure, he watched the dawn break, and the sun rise behind the opposite hill. He got up, opened the window, and looking out, saw a man throw himself off a horse that was all in a foam, and enter the house. The next minute the clock struck eight.

Surprised at this circumstance, Thaddeus descended to the parlour, where he found the man; who, being Pembroke's messenger, had returned express from the castle, bearing an order from Sir Robert (who was seized alarmingly ill) that his son should come back immediately.

Dismayed to the soul with this new distress, Mr. Somerset gave the Count such a strain to his breast when he bade him farewell, as might have informed a more suspicious person, that it was intended for a final parting: but Thaddeus discerned nothing more in the anguish of his friend's countenance, than fear for the safety of Sir Robert; and, fervently wishing his recovery, he bade Pembroke remember, that should more assistance be necessary, Dr. Cavendish would remain at the abbey till lady Albina's return to the Wold.

"Mr. Somerset being gone; towards noon, when the Count was anxiously waiting the appearance of the physician from the room of his sister, he was surprised by the abrupt entrance of two gentlemen. He rose, and bowing, inquired what were their business? The elder

of the men, with a swoln countenance, and in a voice of thunder, announced himself to be the Earl of Tinemouth, and the other as his son.

"We are come," continued he, standing at a haughty distance, "we are come, to carry from this nest of infamy, lady Albina Stanhope, whom some one of her mother's paramours—perhaps you, Sir? dared to steal from her father's house, yesterday evening. Tell me, if you do not wish to meet the chastisement due to your situation, where my daughter is?"

With difficulty the count Sobieski could suppress the passions that were rising in his breast. He turned a scornful glance on the person of lord Harwold, (who with an air of insufferable derision, was coolly measuring his figure through an eye-glass;) and then replying to the Earl, said in a firm voice; "My lord, whoever you suppose me to be, it matters not; I now stand in the place of lady Tinemouth's executor; and, to my last gasp, I will prove myself the defender of her injured name."

"Her lover!" interrupted lord Harwold, turning on his heel.

"Her defender, Sir," repeated Thaddeus, with a tremendous frown; "and shame and sorrow will pursue the son, that requires a stranger to supply his duty."

"Wretch!" cried the Earl, forgetting his assumed loftiness, and advancing passionately towards Thaddeus, with his stick held up; "how dare you address such language to an English nobleman?"

"By the right of Nature, which hold her laws over all mankind:" returned he, calmly looking on the raised stick, "When an English nobleman forgets that he is a son, he is amenable to meet reproach from the meanest vassal he commands."

"You see, my lord," cried Harwold, sliding behind his father, "what we bring on ourselves by harbouring these democratic foreigners! Sir," added he, addressing himself to Thaddeus; "your dangerous principles shall be communicated to the Alien-office! Such fellows ought to be hanged."

Sobieski eyed the enraged little lord with contempt; and, turning to the Earl, who was again opening his lips to speak, he said in an unaltered tone, "I cannot guess, Lord Tinemouth, what is the reason of this, at

tack on me. I came here by mere accident; I found the Countess ill; and, from respect to her excellent qualities, I remained with her till her eyes were closed for ever. She prayed to see her daughter before she died. What human heart could deny a mother such a request? and my friend Pembroke Somerset undertook to bring lady Albina to the Abbey."

"Pembroke Somerset!" echoed the Earl, "A pretty guard for my daughter, truly! I make no doubt, he is just such a rascal as his father; just such another as yourself! I am not to be imposed on by your falsehoods: I know lady Tinemouth to have been a disgrace to me; and you to be that German adventurer, on whose account I sent her from London."

Surprised at this unexpected calumny on the memory of a woman, whose fame from any other mouth, came as unsullied as purity itself, Thaddeus gazed with horror at the furious countenance of the man whom he believed to be his father. His heart swelled, his temples throbbed; and, not deigning to reply to a charge as unmanly as it was false, he quietly took out of his pocket the two letters which the Countess had dictated to her husband and her son.

Lord Harwold tore his open, cast his eyes over the first words, then crumbling it up in his hand, threw it from him, exclaiming, "I am not to be frightened, either by her arts, or the lies of her fellows."

Thaddeus, no longer master of himself, sprung towards this unnatural son, and, seizing his arm with the strength of a Hercules; "Lord Harwold!" cried he, in a dreadful voice, "If it were not that I have some mercy on you for that parent's sake, whom like a parricide, you are giving a second death by such murderous slander, I would resent her wrongs at the hazard of your worthless life!"

"My lord! my lord!" cried the trembling Harwold, quaking under the gripe of Thaddeus, and shrinking from the terrible brightness of his eyes; "my lord! my lord, save me!"

The Earl, almost suffocated with rage, called out, "Ruffian! Let go my son!" and again raising his arm, aimed a blow at the head of Thaddeus, who, wrenching the stick out of the foaming lord's hand, snapped it in two, and threw the pieces out of the window.

Lord Harwold took this opportunity to ring the bell violently; on which summons, his own two servants entered the room.

"Now, you low-born, insolent scoundrel!" cried the disarmed Earl, stamping with his feet, and pointing to the men who stood in the door-way; "You shall be turned neck and heels out of this house. Richard, James, collar that fellow instantly."

Thaddeus only extended his arm to the men, (who were confusedly looking on each other,) and calmly said; "If either of you attempt to obey this command of your lord's, you shall have cause to repent it."

The men retreated. The Earl repeated his orders.

"Rascals! Do as I command you, or instantly prepare to be turned away. I will teach you, added he, clenching his fist at the Count, who stood resolutely and serenely before him, "I will teach you how to behave to a man of high birth!"

The footmen were again retarded from approaching, by a glance from the intimidating eyes of Thaddeus; who, turning with calm dignity to the storming Earl, "You can teach me nothing about high birth," said he, "that I do not already know. Could it be of any independent benefit to a man, then had not I received the taunts and insults which you have dared to cast upon me."

At that moment, Dr. Cavendish having heard a bustle, made his appearance. Amazed at the sight of two strangers, whom from their enraged countenances, and the proud elevation with which Thaddeus was standing between them, he rightly judged to be the Earl and his son, he advanced towards his friend; intending to support him in the attack which he saw was menaced, by the violent gestures of his visitors.

"Dr. Cavendish," said Thaddeus, speaking to him as he approached; "your name must be a passport to the confidence of any man! I therefore shall gratify the husband of my ever-lamented friend, by quitting this house; but I delegate you to the office with which she entrusted me. I leave you in charge of her sacred remains; and of the jewels, which you will find in her ladyship's room. She desired that half of them might be *given with her blessing* to her daughter; and the other *half, with her pardon*, to her son."

"Tell me, Dr. Cavendish," cried the Earl, as Thaddeus was passing him to leave the room; "Who is that insolent fellow? By heaven, he shall smart for this!"

"Aye, that he shall; added Lord Harwold; "if I have any interest with the Duke of Portland."

Dr. Cavendish with a flushed cheek, was preparing to speak, when Thaddeus, turning round at this last threat of the viscount, said, "If I did not feel myself as high above Lord Harwold, as heaven is from the earth, perhaps he might provoke me to treat him as he merits; but I spurn such resentment, as I despise him. For you, my lord;" added he, addressing the Earl with an agitated countenance and voice; "there is an angel above, who pleads against the insults that you have obstinately heaped on an innocent man."

Thaddeus disappeared as he uttered the last word; and hastening from the house and park, stopped at a farmer's cottage, near the brow of the hill. The owners of this humble little place, being the parents of one of lady Tinemouth's maids, gladly welcomed the so highly-praised Mr. Constantine; and offered him the commmand of their house, until he might find it convenient to quit the neighbourhood.

Any prospect of repose, promised elysium to him: with harrassed and torn nerves, he took possession of an apartment, which looked down upon the road that led from the abbey to the town. The rapidity of the late events, bewildered his senses like the illusions of a dream He had seen his father, his brother, his sister; and most probably he had parted from them for ever: At least he hoped, that he should never again be tortured with the sight of lord Tinemouth or his son.

"How!" thought he, whilst he walked up and down his solitary apartment, "how could the noble nature of my mother, love such a man? And how could he have held so long an empire over the pure heart of the Countess?"

Over and over again, he asked himself that question; but could return no answer: He could no where discern in the bloated features, and passionate gestures of the Earl, any of that beauty of countenance, or grace of manners, which had charmed alike Therese Sobieski, and the tender Adeliza. Like those hideous chasms which are dug deep in the land by the impetuous swipes

of a torrent, the course of violent passions leaves vast and irreparable traces on the soul. So it was with Lord Tinemouth.

"Gracious Providence!" ejaculated Thaddeus;—"How legibly does vice or virtue write itself on the countenance! The Earl's figure and features may be fine, but the lineaments of profligacy have degraded every part of him. Good God! Can he be my father! Can it be his blood that is now running in my veins? Can it be his blood, that rises at this moment with detestation against him?"

Before the sun set, Thaddeus was aroused from these painful soliloquies, by still more painful emotions: He saw from his window, a hearse driving at full gallop up the road, which ascended to the abbey; and presently return with a more solemn pace, followed by a post-chaise and the Earl's coach.

"Unfeeling wretches!" cried Thaddeus, leaning out of the window; and pursuing with his eye, the tips of the sable plumes as the cavalcade wound round the road; "Could ye not allow this poor corse a little rest? Must her injuries be extended to the grave? Must her cold relics be insulted, be hurried to the tomb, without reverence, without decency?"

The noble heart of Thaddeus, distended, beat, and writhed with horror, at this climax of the Earl's barbarity. Dr. Cavendish entered; he began to speak of the perpetrators of an act, which he deemed sacrilege against the dead; but Thaddeus could not bear it; and he interrupted him by inquiring how lady Albina had borne such brutal treatment of her mother's remains.

"Very ill," returned the Doctor; "and though I warned the Earl, that to compel her ladyship to follow the hearse, would be at the imminent peril of her life, yet he would not be softened. He put her into the coach in a state of insensibility, with no other assistant than a woman servant, who received her into her arms; and then, loaded with the secret curses of every honest heart, I saw him set off in the post-chaise which was already occupied by his detestable son.—Heaven's malediction must follow them!"

The doctor pursued the subject. Sobieski's wearied spirits listened to him with patience; for nothing could now be said to increase an abhorrence which had gain-

ed its height. He avowed to himself that he hated th Earl; and he hearkened in gloomy silence to the nev crimes recounted by his friend.

In the midst of this depressing conversation, a cou rier arrived from Dr. Cavendish's Stamford patient, de siring that he would return immediately. The gen tleman having sustained a relapse, Cavendish, witl some reluctance to quit the Count (whom he still knev by no other name than Constantine) ordered the chais to the door. He shook hands with Thaddeus, requeste he would let him hear from him, and bidding him many affectionate adieus, looked out of the carriage window till the faint light of the moon, and the fading glimme of the cottage candles, failed to make the little spot which contained his friend, even discernible.

CHAPTER V.

For the first time during many nights, Thaddeus slept soundly; but his dreams were disturbed, and, he awoke from them at an early hour unrefreshed, and in much fever.

The simple breakfast which his cottage host and hostess set before him, was hardly touched. Their nicely dressed dinner met with the same fate. He was ill, and neither possessed appetite nor spirits to eat. The good people being too civil to intrude upon him, he sat alone in his window from eight o'clock (at which he had arisen) till the cawing of the rooks as they returned to the abbey woods, reminded him that evening was coming on. He was uneasy at the absence of Somerset; not so much on his own account, as on that of Sir Robert's, whose encreased danger might have occasioned this delay: however, he hoped otherwise. Longing earnestly for a temporary asylum under the roof of his friend, he trusted that the sympathy of Pembroke would heal all his wounds, and fit him (if it were required) yet farther to brave the buffets of adverse fortune. Nor was Miss Beaufort forgotten. If ever one idea more than another, sweetened the bitterness of his reflections, it was the remembrance of the lovely Mary. Whenever her image rose before him; whether standing with folded arm

and looking with vacant gaze on the valley beneath; or, when cast upon his watchful pillow, he opened his aching eyes to the morning light; still, as her beautiful figure presented itself to his mind, he sighed; but it was a sigh laden with balm; it did not tear his breast like those which were wrung from him by the hard hand of calamity and insult; it was the soft breath of love, which makes man dream of heaven, whilst it betrays him to the grave. Thaddeus, thought it delightful to recollect how she had looked on him; it was happiness, to know that he owed his liberty to her: and the anticipation, that he should again dwell in her smiles; again draw bliss from her eyes, swelled, agitated, and intoxicated his soul.

"Sweet Mary!" murmured he, "I shall see thee once more! I shall again experience thy kindness! I will thank thee with my heart, and think myself blest, in being allowed the privilege of loving thee in silence, and for ever."

The sight of Pembroke riding through the farmer's fields towards the cottage, agreeably recalled the wandering mind of Sobieski. He went out to meet him; Mr. Somerset, putting his horse on a gallop, was at his friend's side, and had alighted, before he could cross the first meadow. Thaddeus immediately inquired after the Baronet's health. Pembroke answered the question with an incoherency devoid of all meaning. Thaddeus looked at him with surprise. They walked towards the house, but he did not seem to recover himself; his absence of mind, and the wild rambling of his eyes whenever he was spoken to, were so striking, that the Count entertained no doubt of some dreadful accident.

As soon as they entered the little parlour, Pembroke threw himself into a chair, and, throwing off his hat, wiped the perspiration from his face, which, though a cold November evening, was streaming down his forehead. Thaddeus felt suspense too painful to be endured.

"What is the matter, dear Pembroke? Is Miss Beaufort well?"

"Perfectly:" returned he, "Every body is well, excepting myself and my father, who I verily believe has lost his *senses*; at any rate, he will drive me mad."

The manner in which this reply was uttered, astonished Thaddeus so much, that he could only gaze on

the convulsed features of his friend with wonder. Pembroke observed the amazement which sat in his eyes, and laying his hand on his arm; "My dear, dear Sobieski!" said he, "What do I not owe to you? Good Heaven, how humbled do I feel myself in your sight! But, there is a Power above, who knows how intimately you are woven with every artery of this heart!"

"I believe it, my kind Pembroke;" cried Thaddeus, yet more alarmed than before; "Tell me what it is that distresses you! If my counsel, or my sympathy, can offer any thing to comfort or assist you, you know that I am your own."

Pembroke burst into tears, and covering his streaming eyes with his handkerchief, exclaimed, "I am indeed distressed, distressed even beyond your comfort. Oh! how can I speak it! You will despise my father, Thaddeus! You will spurn me!"

"Impossible!" cried he, with energy; though his flushed cheek and fainting heart, immediately declared that he had anticipated what he must hear.

"I see," cried Pembroke, regarding the altered features of his friend with a glance of agony; "I see, that you think it is possible, that my father can sink me below my own contempt."

Thaddeus, felt the benumbing touch of ingratitude run through his veins; his frame was chilled, was petrified; but his just affection, and calmed countenance, proclaimed how true a judgment he had passed on the whole. He took the burning hand of Mr. Somerset in his own, and, with a steady and consoling voice, said, "Assure yourself, dear Pembroke, whatever be the commands of your father, I shall adhere to them. I can understand by these generous emotions, that he objects to receive me as your friend. Perhaps," added he, a gloom of suspicion flashing through his mind; "perhaps Miss Beaufort may have perceived the devotedness of my heart, and disdaining my——"

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" cried Pembroke, starting from his chair; "Do not implicate my poor cousin! Do not add to her disappointment, the misery that you suspect her! No, Thaddeus," continued he in a calmer tone, "Mary Beaufort loves you: she confessed it in an agony of grief on my bosom, just before I came away; and only through her, dare I ever expect to meet for

giveness from *you*. In spite of my father, you may marry her. She has no curse to dread: she, need not sacrifice all that is most précious in her sight, to the obstinate caprice of criminal resentment!"

"A curse!" reiterated Thaddeus, "How is this? What have I done to deserve such hatred from your father?"

"O! nothing;" cried Pembroke, "nothing. My father never saw you. My father thanks you for all you have done for me; but it is your country that he hates. Some Polander, years back, injured him; and my father took a fatal oath against the whole nation. He declares, he cannot, he will not break it, were he by so doing, to save his own life, or even mine; for (Heaven forgive me!) I was this morning wrought up to such a pitch of phrenzy, that I threatened to destroy myself, rather than sacrifice my gratitude and honour to his cruel commands! Nay, to convince you that his no personal enmity to yourself, he ordered me to give you writings which will put you in possession of five hundred a year for ever. I have them with me."

All the pride of his princely house, rose at once in the breast of Thaddeus. Though full of indignation at this insult of Sir Robert, he regarded the averted face of his friend with compassion, whilst in a firm voice, he rejected the degrading compromise.

"Tell your father," added he addressing Pembroke in a tone, which even his affection could not soften from a command; "that my absence is not to be bought with money, nor my friendship so rewarded."

Pembroke covered his burning face with his hands. This sight, at once brought down the haughty spirit of the Count, who continued, in gentler accents; "What ever be the sentiments of Sir Robert Somerset, they shall meet with due attention from me. He is your father, therefore I respect him; but he has put it out of his power to oblige me: I cannot accept his bounty. Though your heart, my dearest Pembroke, is above all price, yet I will make it a sacrifice to your duty,"—And by so doing, put the last seal on my misfortunes! was the meaning of the heavy sigh which accompanied his last words.

Pembroke traversed the room in agony. "Merciful *Providence!*" cried he, wringing his clasped hands,

"direct me! O Thaddeus! if you could read my tortured heart, you would pity me; you would see that this business is tearing my soul from my body. What am I to do? I cannot, I will not, part with you for ever."

The Count went up to him, and drew him to a seat; "Be satisfied," said he, "that I am convinced of your affection. Whatever may happen, this assurance will be sufficient to give *me* comfort; therefore, I entreat you, dear Pembroke, by that affection, not to bring regret to me, and reproach to yourself, by disobeying the will of your father! If we separate for life, remember, my beloved friend, that the span of our existence here, is short; we shall meet again in a happier world; perhaps more blest, for having immolated our wishes to hard duty in this."

"Cease, Sobieski, cease!" cried Pembroke, "I can draw no consolation from this reasoning. It is not duty to obey a hatred little short of distraction; and, if we now separate, I know I shall never feel peace more. Good Heaven! what comfort can I find, when I know that you are exposed to all the indignities which the world levels against the unfortunate? Can I indulge in the luxuries of my father's house, when I know that you have neither a home nor subsistence? No, Thaddeus, I am not such a villain. I will not give you up, though my father should load me with curses; I trust there is a just power above, that would avert them."

Perceiving that argument at this time would not only be fruitless, but probably incense his friend's irritated nature to the commission of some rash action, Thaddeus pretended to overlook the frantic gesture and voice which terminated this speech; and, assuming a serene air, he replied: "Let this be the subject of future conversations. At present I must conjure you by the happiness of us both, to return to the Castle. You know my message to Sir Robert. Present my respects to your aunt; and, added he, after a pause, "assure Miss Beaufort, that whilst I have life, her goodness will be its most animating principle."

Pembroke interrupted him. "Why these messages, dear Thaddeus! Do not suppose, that if I fulfil my father's order to return to Somerset to-night, that it is our separation. Gracious Heaven! is it so easy a matter to part for ever?"

"Not for ever! O no:" replied Thaddeus, grasping his hand; we shall see each other again; only meanwhile, repeat those messages to your aunt and cousin. Go, my dear Pembroke, to your father; and may the Lord of heaven bless you!"

The last words were spoken in almost a stifled voice, as he opened his arms and strained his friend to his breast.

"I shall see you to-morrow?" cried Pembroke; "on no other condition I leave you now."

Thaddeus made no other answer to this demand (which he determined should never be granted) than a second embrace. Pembroke went out of the room, to order his horses, then returning again, he stood in the door-way, and holding out his hand to the Count, said, "Farewell, till to-morrow." Thaddeus shook it warmly, and he disappeared.

When the outward door closed after his friend, the Count remained on the seat into which he had thrown himself. He did not venture to move, lest he should by chance catch a glance of Pembroke from the window: Now that he was gone, he felt the full worth of what he had relinquished. He had resigned a man who loved him; one who had known and revered his ever-lamented grandfather, and his mother; the only one with whom he could have discoursed of their virtues! He felt that he was severed from him, the link which had united his present state with his former fortunes; and throwing his arms along a table that stood near him, he leaned his aching head upon them, and in idea followed, with an anguished heart, the progress and reception of his friend at the Castle.

The racking misery which tortured the mind of Mr. Somerset, was not borne with equal resignation. Conscious of having inflicted fresh wounds on the breast of his noble friend, his spirits were so ill adapted to society, that he felt rather pleased than disappointed, when he found the supper-room at the Castle quite vacant, and only one cover on the table awaiting his arrival.

He asked a few questions of the servants, who informed him that it was already late, past twelve o'clock; and that Sir Robert, who was taken worse, had retired to bed early in the evening.

"And where are my aunt and cousin?" demanded Pembroke,

One of the men replied, that in consequence of Miss Beaufort having been suddenly indisposed, both the ladies had left the supper-room before eleven. Pembroke readily guessed the cause of this disorder: he too truly adjudged it to Mary's extreme anxiety respecting the reception which the count Sobieski would give to his disgraceful errand; and, sighing bitterly, he said no more, but went instantly to his chamber.

The restless state of his mind awoke Mr. Somerset by times. Full of solicitude for the success of an application which he intended to make to Miss Beaufort, he traversed the terrace for an hour before he was summoned to breakfast. The baronet continuing unwell, the ladies only were in the room when he entered. Miss Dorothy, who had learnt the particulars of the late events from the agitated Mary, longed to ask Pembroke how his friend would act on her brother's command; but every time that she moved her lips, his inflamed eye and wan countenance made her stop, and fear to venture on the subject. Mary sat in mute dejection, watching the hurried actions of her cousin; and when, after he had swallowed a bason of tea, he rose up, and took up his hat to leave the room, she looked anxiously towards him. Pembroke turned round at the same moment, and holding out his hand to her, said, "Come, Mary; I want to say something to you. Will you walk with me on the terrace?"

Miss Beaufort, with trepidation and a beating heart, took his arm, and proceeded in silence till they reached the gravel walk. A mutual, and deep drawn sigh, was the first opening of a conversation, on which the souls of both hung with interest, hope, and dread. Pembroke was the first who began.

"My dear, dear, Mary," said he, "you are now my sole dependance. From what I told you yesterday of my father's stubborn inflexibility, we can have no hope of his relenting. indeed, after what has passed, I could not flatter myself that Thaddeus Sobieski would on any account submit to an obligation at his hands. Already he has refused, with all the indignation I expected, Sir Robert's offer of an annuity. My dear cousin, how can I exist, and yet witness this noble friend in distress, and living without the succour of my friendship? Heaven knows, this must be the case; for I would sooner perish

than venture to insult the man whom my father has treated so ill, with any pecuniary offers from me! Therefore, dear Mary, it is on you alone that I depend. Thaddeus adores you, and you love him. Marry him, my beloved cousin," cried he, catching her hand to his lips, "and relieve my heart from a load of shame and misery! Be generous, my sweet Mary," added he, supporting her now trembling frame against his breast; "Act up to your noble nature, and offer him by me, that hand which his calamities and disinterestedness preclude him from requesting."

Miss Beaufort, hardly able to articulate, from the emotions that choaked her utterance, replied, "I would give him all that I possess, could it purchase him one tranquil hour; I would serve him for ever, could I do it and be unknown; but——."

"O, do not hesitate! Do not doubt!" interrupted Pembroke, "To serve your friends, I know that you are capable of the most extraordinary exertions; I know that there is nothing within the verge of possibility, that your generous disposition would not attempt: then, my beloved Mary, dare to be what you are; by having the magnanimity to act as you know you ought; by offering your hand to him, shew the noble Sobieski, that you really deserve the devotion of a hero's heart."

"Dear Pembroke," replied Mary, wiping the still gliding tears from her burning cheek, "after the confession which you drew from me yesterday, I will not deny, that to possess the esteem of your friend would render me the happiest of created beings; but I cannot believe what your sanguine affection tells me; I cannot suppose, situated as I was at lady Dundas's, under a cloud of fashion, and surrounded by frivolous and contemptible society, that he should discover any thing in me to respect: every way embarrassed as I was, disliking my companions, afraid of my own interest in him, a veil was drawn over my mind, through which he could neither judge of my good nor bad qualities: how then can I flatter myself, or do the count Sobieski such injury, as to imagine that he could feel any preference for such an insignificant character as I must have appeared?"

It was some time before Pembroke could shake the hold which this prepossession had taken of Miss Beaufort's mind. After having set in every possible light the

terms with which his friend had spoken of her name; he at length convinced her of what her heart so earnestly wished to believe; that she was not entirely indifferent to Sobieski.

Mr. Somerset's next achievement was to overcome her scruples against commissioning him with the message he was desirous to communicate to Thaddeus. Owing to the continual recurrence of her fears, that the warmth of her cousin might have too highly coloured the first object of debate, this task was not more easy to accomplish than the former. In vain she remonstrated, in vain she doubted, in vain demurred; Pembroke would not be denied; and as with faultering lips, she assented to the permission which he had almost extorted; she threw her arms round his neck, and implored him to be careful of her honour; to remember that she had put into his charge all that was most precious to her, the modesty of her sex, and her own delicacy.

Pembroke, delighted at this consent, notwithstanding he received it through the medium of many heavy tears, embraced his cousin with ten thousand animating promises of future happiness; and having allowed her to enter the house, mounted his horse, and set off on the full gallop, towards Harrowby-Hill.

CHAPTER VI.

When Thaddeus recovered from the reverie into which he had been thrown by the departure of Mr. Somerset, he considered how he might remove out of a country wherein he had only met with, and occasioned, distress.

The horrid price which Pembroke's father had set on the continuance of their friendship, rendered it necessary that his flight should be immediate. Averse to a second interview with his friend, which could only produce them pain; he determined that not another morn should rise upon him in Lincolnshire; and taking a pen, with all the future loneliness of his fate painted on his heart, he wrote two letters.

One he addressed to Mr. Somerset, bidding him that

farewell which he confessed he could never have taken. As he wrote, his hand trembled, his bosom swelled; and he hastily shut his eye-lids to withhold his tears from shewing themselves on the paper: his emotion, his grief, were driven back, were concealed; but the tenderness of his soul flowed over the letter. He forgave Pembroke's father, for Pembroke's sake; and, in spite of their personal disunion, he vowed that no earthly consideration should restrain his love from following the steps of his friend, even into the regions of eternity. He closed his melancholy epistle, with informing Mr. Somerset, that as he should quit England immediately, any search after him, which his generous nature might dictate, would be in vain.

Though Thaddeus Sobieski would have disdained a life of dependence on the greatest potentate of the world; though he rejected, with the same sincerity, a similar proposal from his friend, and despised the degrading offer of Sir Robert; yet he felt no disparagement to his dignity, no infringement on the disinterested nature of his friendship, when he accepted, and resolved to retain, the money which Pembroke had conveyed to him in prison. Thaddeus never acted but from principle. His honourable and penetrating mind knew exactly at what point to draw the tender thread of delicacy. Pride and independence, with him, were distinct terms. Receiving assistance from a friend, and leaning on him wholly for support, had different meanings: he accepted the first with gratitude; he would have thought it impossible to live and endure the last. On these premises, Pembroke was never pained by any attempt to return his bounty. Indeed, Thaddeus would have considered himself unworthy to confer a benefit, if he had not known how to receive one. This spirit left no part of Miss Beaufort's obligation on his mind, but its sweetness; and with these impressions, and a throbbing heart, he began a short address to her.

"*To Miss Beaufort.*"

"My faculties seem to lose their power, when I take up my pen to address, for the first and the last time, *Miss Beaufort.* I hardly know what I would say—*what I ought;* I dare not venture to write all that

I feel. But have you not been my benefactress? Did you not assert my character, and give me liberty, when I was calumniated, and in distress? Did you not ward from me the scorn of unpitying folly? Did you not console me with your own compassion? You have done all this; and surely you will not despise the gratitude of a heart which you have condescended to sooth and to comfort? At least, I cannot leave England for ever, without imploring blessings on the head of Miss Beaufort; without thanking her on my knees, on which I am writing, for that gracious and benign spirit, which discovered a breaking heart under the mask of serenity; which penetrated through the garb of poverty and dependence, and saw that the contemned Constantine was not what he seemed! Your smiles, Miss Beaufort: your voice, speaking commiseration, were my sweetest consolations during those heavy months of sorrow, which I endured at Dundas-house: I contemplated you as a pitying angel, sent to reconcile me to a life which had already become a burthen. These are the benefits which Miss Beaufort has bestowed on a friendless exile; these are the benefits which she has bestowed on me! And they are written on my soul. Not until I go down into the grave shall they be forgotten. Oh! not even then, for when I rise again, I shall find them still registered there!

"Farewell, most respected, most dear Miss Beaufort. May the Father of heaven bless, with his choicest care, her, whose name shall ever be the first in the prayers of her most grateful, most devoted servant,

THADDEUS CONSTANTINE SOBIESKI."

"*Harrowby Hill,*
11 o'clock at night."

When he had finished this epistle, with a paralyzed hand he enclosed it in the envelope which contained Somerset's; then writing a few lines to the good old farmer, he begged him to accept the note which they contained, as a small compensation for his great hospitality; and, having sealed both packets he disposed them so on the table, that they might be the first things seen on entering the room.

It now being midnight, he thought it high time to set out on his dismal journey. Having tied some linen in a grey silk handkerchief, which had formerly been wrapped round his neck by lady Sara, one wet evening in Grosvenor place; he put all his remaining money into his pocket. It did not exceed thirty pounds; the rest having been expended in his way to the Abbey, and in defraying little expenses attending the illness of the Countess, to which her purse (ever kept low by the tardiness of the Earl's payments) was not prepared to answer. However as he determined to walk to London, where he would embark for America, he hoped that it would at least hold out, untill he had landed on a shore, from whence he trusted never to return.

"Ah!" cried he, as he gently closed the window by which he leaped into the little garden, "What accumulated sins, O Russia, will be heaped upon thy head! Every hasty sigh that rebels in my breast against the almighty hand, which is again driving me out a wanderer on the wide world, calls vengeance upon thee! how many, wretched country!" added he, resting on the bar of the outward gate; "how many hast thou driven from their homes! how many hast thou made vagabonds and murderers for that scanty pittance, of which with remorseless and wanton gripe, they were deprived by thee? —Oh, righteous Power of Justice and Mercy!" cried he, stretching his arms towards that heaven, over which the piercing winds of a bleak October night were scattering the thick and pillowy clouds; grant me fortitude to bear, with resignation to thy will, the miseries that I may yet have to encounter. Oh!" added he, his heart melting as the idea presented itself! "teach me to forget what I have been! Teach me to forget, that on this dreadful night, last year, I clasped the dying body of my dear grandfather in these arms!"

He could not speak further; but leaning his pale face against the gate, remained for a few minutes dissolved in anguished recollection: then recovering himself by a sudden start, he proceeded with hasty steps through the different meadows, till they conducted him into the high road.

It was on the tenth of October 1795, that the Count *Sobieski commenced* his lonely and melancholy journey; *It was on the* tenth of October 1794, that he found the

Palatine, bleeding to death in the midst of a heap of slain. The coincidence of his present feelings with those of a twelvemonth past, powerfully affected Thaddeus; they recalled to him remembrances in their most vivid colours, which time, and the many intermediate events, had considerably softened.

Distressed by these painful scenes, which memory, ever true to her nature, raised before his mind's eye in rapid and long succession; he quickened his pace: he slackened it; he quickened it again; but nothing could rid him of those tormenting images, which seemed to glide around him like visible spirits of the departed.

When the dawn broke, and the sun rose, he found himself advanced several miles on the south side of Panton Hill. The spiry isles of Harrowby Abbey were discernable through the mist; and the towers of Somerset Castle, from their height and situation, were as distinctly seen as if he had been at their base. Neither of these objects were calculated to raise the spirits of Thaddeus. The sorrows of the Countess, whose eyes he had so recently closed; and the treatment he afterwards received from the man to whom he owed his life, were recollections which made him turn away from the abbey with a pang, and fix his eyes on Somerset. He looked towards its ivied head, with all the regret, and all the tenderness which can overflow a human heart: under that roof, he believed the eyes of his adored Mary were sealed in sleep; and in an instant his agitated soul addressed her as if she had been present.

"Farewell, most lovely, most beloved! The conviction, that I resign even the hope of ever again beholding thee, to the peace of my friend, shall give me comfort, when I am drawing my breath in a far, far distant world."

In this way, thus communing with his own troubled spirit, he walked on the whole day in his way to London. Totally absorbed in meditation, he did not remark the gaze of curiosity which followed his elegant yet distressed figure; as he passed through the different towns and villages. Pondering on the past, the present and the future, he neither felt hunger nor thirst; but, with a fixed eye and abstracted countenance, pursued his route, till night and weariness overtook him in the midst of the high road, far from any house.

Thaddeus looked around, and above: the sky was clear, and glittering with stars; the moon shining on a near branch of the Ouse, which divides Huntingdonshire from Cambridgeshire, lit the green heath which skirted its banks. Thaddeus wished not for a more magnificent canopy; and, placing his wallet under his head, he lay down beneath a hillock of furze and broom, and slept till morning.

When he awoke from a sleep, which fatigue and fasting had rendered more torpid than refreshing, he found that the splendours of the night had been succeeded by a heavy rain; and that he was drenched through. He rose up with a stiffness in his limbs, a pain in his head, and a dimness over his eyes, which almost disabled him from moving. He readily judged that he had caught cold; and every moment feeling himself grow worse, he thought it necessary to seek some house, where he might purchase rest and assistance.

To this end, leaning on his stick, but no longer able to incumber himself with even the light load of his bundle, he threw it amongst the brambles: believing from the symptoms which he felt, that he had not many hours to endure the ills of life, he staggered a few yards farther: no habitation appeared in sight; his limbs became more feeble, his eyes seemed totally obscured, and he sunk down on a bank. For a minute he attempted to struggle with the cold grasp of death, which he believed was fastening on his heart.

"And are my days to be so short! Are they to end thus?" thought he; "Merciful Providence, pardon my repining!"

These were the last movements of the lips of Thaddeus whilst his blood seemed freezing to insensibility. His eyes closed, his head fell back; and pale and without animation, he lay at the foot of the tree near which he had dropt.

The Count had been a quarter of an hour in this death-like state, when a gentleman, who was passing that road in his way to a country-seat in Cambridgeshire, thought he perceived a man lying amongst the nettles and grass a little onward on the heath. The traveller immediately stopped his carriage, and ordering one of the out-riders to alight, bade him examine whether the object he saw were living or dead.

The man obeyed; and presently returning, with an affrighted countenance informed his master, that it was the body of a man, who, by his dress, appeared to be a gentleman, and who, being quite senseless, he supposed had been murdered by robbers. The features of the benevolent stranger immediately reflected the hue of his servant's; but ordering the chariot door to be opened, he took in his hand a bottle of drops (which from his own invalid state, was his travelling companion) and alighting, hastened to the side of the lifeless Thaddeus.

By this time, all the servants were collected round the spot; and the good man himself, whilst he gazed with pity on the marble features of the Count, observed with pleasure, that he saw no marks of violence. Supposing that the present accident might have been occasioned by a fit; and considering it possible by proper means to recall life; he desired that the unfortunate person's waistcoat might be unclosed; and, taking off his hat, he contrived to pour some drops into his mouth. Their warmth appeared to have renewed pulsation in the heart; for one of the servants, who was stooping, declared that it beat under his hand. When the benevolent gentleman convinced himself that this report was true, he ordered his servants to place the poor traveller in his carriage; having only another mile to go before he reached Deerhurst, he said he hoped that his charge might be restored at the end of their destination.

Whilst the postillions drove in full gallop towards the house, the cold face of Thaddeus rested on the bosom of the stranger, who continued to chafe his temples with lavender water till the chariot stopped before the gates. Two men carried the Count to the house; and, having left him with their master, and a medical man who resided near, other restoratives were applied, which succeeded in recalling his wandered senses. When he had completely recovered his powers, and was able to look round and distinguish objects, he saw that he was supported by two gentleman, and in a magnificent bedchamber.

Gratitude, it may be said, was the first born feeling in the soul of Thaddeus. In the moment of his revival from that sleep, into which he believed he had fallen, till time should be lost in eternity, he pressed the hands of them who held his; not doubting but that they were

the good Samaritans who had preserved him from perishing.

The younger of the gentlemen, perceiving by the animated lustre which spread over his patient's eyes, that he was going to speak, put his hand on his lips, and said, "Pardon me, Sir! you must not speak. Your life, at present, hangs on a thread; the slightest exertion would snap it: but, as all you want is rest and resuscitation, to supply some great expense which the vital powers have sustained; I must require, that you neither speak, nor be spoken to, till I give permission. Meanwhile, be satisfied, Sir, that you are in the most honourable hands. This gentleman," added he, pointing to his friend, "saw you on the heath, and brought you to his house, where you now are."

Thaddeus bowed his head to them both in sign of gratitude and compliance; and the elder left the room.

CHAPTER VII.

Next morning, when the seal was taken off the lips of Thaddeus, he expressed in the most animated terms, his deep sense of the humanity which had actuated both the gentlemen to take such generous interest in his fate.

"You owe no thanks to me," replied the one who had enjoined and released him from silence, and who was alone with him; "I am only the agent of another. Yet, I do not deny, that in obeying the benevolent orders of Sir Robert Somerset, I have frequent opportunities of gratifying my own heart."

Thaddeus was so confounded at this discovery that he could not speak, and the gentleman proceeded.

"I am apothecary to Sir Robert's household; and, as my excellent master has been long afflicted with an ill state of health, I live in a small lodge at the other end of the park. He is the best man in all the country; nay I believe I may say, the most benevolent in the kingdom; and, should he die (which his late melancholy fits too *fearfully* threaten) both poor and rich would lose *their friend.* Sad and ill as he was this morning, when *I told him that* you were out of danger, he expressed a *pleasure only* known to the truly humane."

Thaddeus, not considering the wildness of the question, hastily demanded, "Does he know who I am?"

The honest apothecary started at the look and tone of voice with which these words were delivered, and then replied; "No; is there any reason, Sir, to make you wish that he should not?"

"Certainly none:" replied Thaddeus recollecting himself, and sighing; "and I shall be impatient till I have an opportunity of telling him how grateful I am for the goodness which he has shewn to me as a stranger."

The apothecary, surprised at these hints (which the Count, not considering their tendency, allowed to escape) gathered sufficient from them, united with the speaker's superior mien, to make him suppose that his patient was some emigrant of quality, whom Sir Robert would rejoice in having served. These surmises and conclusions having passed very quickly through the honest gentleman's brain, he bowed his head with that respect, which the generous mind is proud to pay to nobility in ruins; and resumed:

"Whatever you may be, Sir, a peasant or a prince, you will meet with every hospitality from the noble owner of this house. His spirit is equal in magnificence with the goodness of his heart; Deerhurst will be rendered as comfortable to you, as great benevolence and great wealth can bestow; and I am certain, that Sir Robert will consider the dreadful apoplexy, that brought him from Somerset for change of air, rather fortunate than otherwise, as it has afforded him an opportunity of serving, and knowing you."

Thaddeus blushed at the strain of this speech; and, readily understanding what was passing in the mind of the apothecary, hardly knew how to reply. He paused for a moment, and then said, "All that you have declared, Sir, in praise of Sir Robert Somerset, I cannot have a doubt of his deserving. I have already felt the effects of his humanity, and shall ever remember that my life was prolonged by his means; but I have no pretentions to the honour of his acquaintance. I only wish to see him, that I may thank him for what he has done; therefore, if you will permit me to rise this evening, instead of to-morrow morning, you will oblige me."

To this request, the apothecary gave a respectful, ye

firm denial; and descended, to communicate his observations to his patron.

The anxiety which agitated the Count's mind, when he reflected that he was receiving all these obligations from his most implicable enemy, so occupied and disturbed him, that he passed a sleepless night. The dawn found his fever much augmented; but no corporeal sufferings could persuade him to abandon the resolution of seeing the Baronet, and immediately leaving his house; believing as he did, that all this kindness would have been withheld, had his host known on whom he was pouring such benefits, he felt as if every minute which saw him under Sir Robert's roof, inflicted a new outrage on his own dignity and honour.

To this end then, as soon as Mr. Middleton the apothecary had retired to breakfast, Thaddeus rose from his bed, and was completely dressed before he returned. The good man expostulated on the rashness of what he had done, and argued no less than a relapse from the morning symptoms of his patient. Thaddeus once in his life was obstinate, though civilly so; and, begging a servant to request Sir Robert to indulge him with an audience for a few minutes alone in his library, he soon convinced Mr. Middleton, that his purpose was not to be shaken.

The Baronet returning his compliments, that he should be happy to see his guest, the still anxious apothecary, offered him his assistance down the stairs. Thaddeus needed no help, and gratefully declined it. The exertion necessary to be summoned for this interview, had imparted as much momentary strength to his frame as to his mind; and though his colour was heightened, he entered the library with a firm step.

Sir Robert met him at the door, and, shaking him by the hand, with many warm assurances of pleasure at his recovery, would have led him to a seat; but Thaddeus drawing back, only supported himself against the back of it with his hand; whilst in a steady voice, he expressed the most animated thanks for the benefits he had received; then pausing, and casting the proud lustre of his eyes to the ground, lest their language should tell all that he thought, he continued, "I have only to regret, Sir Robert, that your benevolence has been lavished on a man whom you regard with abhorrence. I

am that count Sobieski, that Polander, whom you commanded your son to see no more. Respecting even the prejudices of my friend's parent, I was hastening to London, meaning to set sail for America with the first ship, when I swooned on the road. I believe I was nearly expiring; your humanity saved me: and I now owe to gratitude, as well as to my own satisfaction, the fulfilment of my declaration. I shall leave Deerhurst immediately; and England, as soon as I am able to embark."

Thaddeus, with a second bow, and not quite so firm a step, without venturing a glance at what he supposed were the shamed looks of the Baronet, was preparing to quit the room, when Sir Robert, with a pale and aghast countenance, exclaimed, "Stop?"

Thaddeus looked at him with wonder. The Baronet, incapable of saying more, pointed to a chair for him to sit down; then sinking into another himself, took out his handkerchief, and wiping away the large drops that stood on his forehead, breathlessly panted for respiration. At last, with a desperate kind of haste, he said:

"Was your mother, Therese Sobieski?"

Thaddeus, still more astonished, replied in the affirmative; and Sir Robert threw himself back on the chair with a deep groan. Hardly knowing what he did, the Count rose from his seat, and advanced towards him: Sir Robert hearing his approach, stretched out his hand; and, with a look of agony, asked who was his father? then, without waiting for a reply, hid his convulsed features beneath his handkerchief. The Baronet's agitation, which now shook him like an earthquake, had become contagious: Thaddeus gazed at him with a palsying uncertainty working at his heart; and, laying his hand upon his bewildered brain, he answered: "I know not. I believe, the earl of Tinemouth. But here is his picture." With a trembling hand he took the case which held it, out of his pocket; and, tearing open the clasps, gave it to Sir Robert, who had started from his position at the name of the Earl. The moment the Baronet's eyes rested on the miniature, he threw it from *him*, and fell senseless back on the chair.

Thaddeus, hardly more alive, sprinkled some water on his face, and with throbbing temples and a beating heart, stood in wordless expectation over him. Such

emotion told him, that something more than
t's hatred of the Polanders had stimulated his
uct; and too earnest for an explanation, to
ssistance, he rejoiced to see by the convulsion
ronet's features, and the heaving of his chest,
nation was returning. In a few minutes he
is eyes, but when he met the anxious gaze of
, he closed them as suddenly, and rising from
staggered up against the chimney-piece, ex-
"O God, direct me!"
us, whose conjectures were now wrought al-
wildness, followed him, and whilst his ex-
frame seemed ready to sink to the earth, im-
n to speak.
ir!" cried he, "If you know any thing about
y? If you know any thing about my father, in
ver me! Or, only tell me; am I so wretched as
son of Lord Tinemouth?"
iolence of the Count's emotions, during this
; petition, totally overcame him; before he
ed speaking, his limbs withdrew their support;
ting down on his knees, his head dropped
s against the side of a chair: though incapable
ng, his beseeching and eager eyes were yet
n the Baronet's averted face.
bert turned hastily round. He saw him sunk,
autiful flower, bruised and trampled on by the
foot of him who had given it root: unable to
r evasive reply to this last appeal of virtue and
, he threw himself with a burst of tears upon
, and exclaimed, "Wretch that I have been!
ski! I am thy father. Dear, injured son of
ppy Therese!"
st words which carried this avowal to the heart
eus, deprived it of motion, and, when Sir Ro-
ected to receive the returning embrace of his
found him senseless in his arms.
ies of the Baronet brought Mr. Middleton and
nt into the room. When the former saw the
the Count, and perceived the agonized position
tron (who was supporting and leaning over his
honest man declared, that he expected nothing
the gentleman's disobedience of his orders.
nce of the servants having recalled Sir Ro

bert's wandering faculties, he desired them to re
Thaddeus to his chamber. Then following them
lence, when they had laid their charge on the be
watched, in extreme but concealed anxiety, till
Middleton, by opening a vein, again brought back
mation to his patient.

The moment the Count unclosed his eyes, they
themselves on the agitated father. He drew the
which held his, to his lips. The tears of paternal
again bathed the cheeks of Sir Robert; he felt how
at his heart was the affection of his deserted son
making a sign for Mr. Middleton to leave the room,
obeyed) he bent his streaming eyes upon the other
of Thaddeus, and said in a faultering voice, "Can
pardon me?"

Thaddeus threw himself on his father's bosom,
wept profusely; then raising Sir Robert's clasped h
in his, whilst his eloquent eyes seemed to searc
heavens, he said, "My dear, dear mother loved
to her latest hour; and I have all my mother's he
whatever may have been your faults, I feel that I
my father."

Sir Robert strained him to his breast. After a pa
whilst he shook the tears from his silver eye-lashes
resumed, "Certain, my dear son, that you requir
pose, and assured that you will not find it till I hav
fered some apology for my unnatural conduct, I
now explain the various circumstances which imp
my actions, and drew distress upon that noble creat
your mother."

Sir Robert hesitated a moment that he might rec
breath, and then went on.

"Keep your situation;" added he, putting d
Thaddeus, who at this opening was raising himself
"I shall tell my melancholy story with less pai
your eyes be not upon me. I will begin from the fi

The Baronet proceeded to say, That very earl
life he had attached himself to Miss Beaufort, the
sister of the late Admiral Beaufort, who was Ma
father; they were then wards of Sir Fulke Some
Mr. Beaufort had been in the navy from a boy; but
sister remaining always at the Castle, an affectio
strong as it was mutual, took place between herself
her cousin Robert. When the young people appl

Sir Fulke for his consent to their marriage, he refused it on the plea of their youth. In vain the passionate Robert declared the reasonableness and ardour of his affection; his father urged his being only a younger son, and in other ways wholly unworthy of his ward, unless he would consent to undergo the polish of a three years tour over the continent. After much altercation, this arrangement was at length complied with; and Robert and Miss Beaufort bade each other adieu at the expense of many sighs and tears. Highly indignant at the unfeeling whim of Sir Fulke; and, provoked with his brother for backing his father's arguments, Robert Somerset set off for Dover, where he was joined by the present Earl of Tinemouth (then Mr. Stanhope) who was banished the country on the same errand: but his was to forget a mistress; Somerset's to deserve one. Stanhope's mother and Robert's having been sisters, the young men met as relations; mutually enraged at their fathers (their mothers having been long dead) they determined to change their names, and to let no one know any thing about them during their travels, except the two women whom they best loved. To this end, as soon as they crossed the channel and had landed in France, they gave themselves out to be brothers, which their great personal resemblance corroborated, and called themselves Sackville. This business settled, they travelled pretty amicably till they reached Naples: Here Mr. Stanhope involved himself in a very dishonourable intrigue with the only daughter of an old British officer, who had retired to that climate for his health. Somerset remonstrated on the villainy of seducing an innocent girl, when he knew that his heart and hand were absolutely devoted to another; and Stanhope, enraged at finding a censor in a companion, whom he had considered as headstrong as himself, ended the argument by striking him. Somerset drew his sword; and it is likely if the servants of their hotel had not interfered, the affray would have been terminated with one of their lives. Since that hour they never met again. Mr. Stanhope left his name and his wounded friend; and, fearful of consequences, fled to Palermo. Robert Somerset, when recovered from his hurts (still retaining the name of *Sackville*) took the way to Florence, in which beautiful city, determining to stay some time, he rather sought

than repelled the civilities of the inhabitants. Here he became acquainted with the Palatine, and the lovely Therese, whose affections he so completely won. Soon after this intimacy commenced, Miss Beaufort ceased to answer his letters. Almost desperate with his fears, he was on the point of going to England, when he received a packet from home. On opening it he found a letter from Miss Beaufort, wherein she informed him, that having long considered their attachment as a childish entanglement, she had tried to wean him from his former folly, by continuing an obstinate silence. Having hardly a doubt that she had succeeded, she now broke through her resolution, as it was to shew him at once, the unreasonableness of making such early engagements. Soon after his departure, a journey up to town taught her to know her own heart: and, in consequence she had yielded her hand to Mr. Somerset, his elder brother. He had always been averse to her marriage with Robert. This shameless declaration was ended by a long homily of advice against similar fetters—and the insult of subscribing herself his "affectionate sister," &c. On the receipt of this stab to all his hopes, he forewore his family for ever, and flying to Therese Sobieski, in a paroxysm of madness and revenge, married her. This rash act perpetrated, he in vain sought for tranquillity; he saw that she had idolized him, but his thoughts were always fixed on his ungrateful Mary; were always deploring her lightness, and execrating the perfidy of his brother. In this temper a second packet found him. Again he saw Miss Beaufort's hand-writing, but he dropt it with horror into the envelope, and tore open the black seal which was affixed to a letter from his father. Here, Sir Fulke confessed such a plan of deceit as petrified his son. He declared, that all which had passed, was devised by Mr. Somerset, in hopes of tempting him to revenge the affront that Mary had put on him, by a hasty marriage. The wretched old man, with many prayers for pardon, acknowledged that this bitter confession was wrung from him by the sudden death of his eldest son, who now lay a corpse in the house. The disconsolate father having related the particulars of Mr. Somerset's death (which happened after three days illness) added, that it was in compliance with his entreaties to preserve Miss Beaufort for him, that

he had agreed to drive Robert from the kingdom. To farther the scheme, of making the separation for ever, he had intercepted all their mutual letters; and, Mr. Somerset himself, had forged that one in Miss Beaufort's name, which carried the intelligence of their union. By the same means, a similar effect was wrought upon the abused Mary; believing Robert unfaithful, she fell into a melancholy, and evinced a carelessness to exterior objects, which they hoped, might in time induce her, through mere weakness of mind, to give her hand to the persecuting passion of Mr. Somerset. "But," continued Sir Fulke, "death has put an end to this unnatural rivalry; and my poor girl, undeceived in her opinion of you, pants to see you, and to give you that hand, which my ill-fated son, and your unhappy father, so unjustly detained."

On the receipt of this packet, with a soul divided between love, humanity, and honour, Robert Somerset sacrificed all to his passions. He adored the womam on whose account he had left his country; and, though every tie of heaven and earth bound him to his deceived and injured wife, he consigned her to the full horrors of such desertion, and hastened to England.

"Shameful to relate," added Sir Robert, "immediately on my landing, I married Mary Beaufort. In her arms, I forgot for a while, Therese and her agonies. But when my dear Pembroke first saw the light, when I prest him to my heart, it seemed as if at the same instant I had stabbed it with a dagger. When I would have breathed a blessing over him, the conviction struck me, that I durst not; that I had deluded the mother who gave him birth; and that at some future period, he might have cause to curse the author of his existence. Well," continued the Baronet, wiping his forehead, "though the birth of this boy had conjured up the image of your mother, which haunted me day and night; I never could summon courage to inquire respecting her fate. When the troubles of Poland commenced, what a dreadful apprehension seized me! The success of the Russians, and the consequent distresses of the nobility, overwhelmed me with fear: I knew not, but they might be forced like the French noblesse, to fly their country; and the bear idea of meeting your grandfather or the injured Therese in England, precipitated me into such a

series of apprehensions, as nearly menaced my life. I became melancholy and ill; I avoided the sight of the newspapers; and, as far as I could (under the plea of the story which you have heard) I withheld my family from speaking on a subject which manifestly gave me pain. But I could not prevent the tongues of our visitors discoursing on a theme which at that period interested every thinking mind. I heard of the valiant Kosciusko, the good Stanislaus, and the Palatine Sobieski with his brave grandson, spoken of in the same breath. I durst not surmise who this grandson was; I durst not ask; I dreaded to know. At length," added he, quickening his voice, "the idol of my heart, she, for whom I had perhaps sacrificed my eternal peace, died in my arms! I received the shock as became a christian: I bent beneath the blow with humility; for I embraced it as the expiation of a crime, which till then, even in the midst of my felicity, had sat on my soul like the hand of death. I bore this trial with resignation. But, when two years after, my eye fell by accident upon the name of Sobieski, in one of the public papers, I could not withdraw it again; my sight was fascinated as if by a rattlesnake; and, in one column I read, how bravely the Palatine fell; and, in the next, the dreadful fate of his daughter. She was revenged!" cried Sir Robert, eagerly grasping the hand of Thaddeus, who could not restrain the groan which burst from his breast. "I was deprived of that reason, which had abused her noble nature, for near three months afterwards. When I recovered my senses," continued he after a pause; "and found that I had so fatally suffered the time of restitution to go by, I began to torment myself, that I had not on the death of lady Somerset, immediately hastened to Poland, and entreated Therese's pardon on my knees. This period of vivid remorse, was soon terminated, by the same arguments which on the first year of my wife's loss, had deterred me from being just. I reconsidered, that the countess Sobieski having had a prior claim to my name, such restitution on my part, must in consequence have illegitimized my darling Pembroke. It was this horrid conviction," exclaimed Sir Robert, a sudden distraction agitating his before affectionate eye. "that caused all my cruelty to you. When my de son described the danger from which you had resc

him; when he told me, that Therese had fostered him with a mother's tenderness; I was probed to the heart: but when he added, that the young count Sobieski was now an alien from his country, and relying on my friendship for a home, my terror was too truly manifested. Horror drove all natural remorse from my soul. I thought an avenging power had sent my deserted child to discover his father, to claim his rights, and to publish me as a villain: and when I saw my innocent son, even on his knees, petitioning for the man whom I believed was come to undo him, I became almost frantic. Under this temper," added he, putting the trembling hand of Thaddeus to his streaming eyes, "I drove out my first-born, to be a guiltless wanderer on the face of the earth: not for his own crimes, but for those of his father: and heaven punished my injustice. When I thought the evidence of my shame, divided from me by an inseparable barrier; when I believed that the ocean would soon separate me from all my fears, a righteous Providence brought thee before my eyes, forlorn and expiring. It was the son of Therese Sobieski that I had exposed to such wretchedness! It was the darling of her heart, that I had consigned to the beating elements! Oh, Thaddeus," cried he, "can I be forgiven for this?"

Thaddeus lulled the wakeful remorse of his venerable father, with such kind arguments to excuse his conduct, as at least imparted to him, a consoling assurance in the generous affection of his son.

When this long and interesting conversation had terminated, Sir Robert well remembering the violent effects of Mr. Somerset's grief at Sobieski's flight and declared abjuration of England; pardoned his son the outrageous reproaches which had driven him from his own house, and very joyfully dispatched a messenger to desire his immediate presence at Deerhurst.

CHAPTER VIII.

That sickness, which is the consequence of mental pain, usually vanishes with its cause. Long before the evening of the ensuing day, Thaddeus had quitted his chamber, and related to his father the rapid incidents of

his brief and eventful career. The voice of Fame had already blazoned him abroad, as "*the plume of war, with early laurels crowned;*" but it was left to his own eloquent tongue, to prove with all the pathos of modesty and feeling, that the most desperate conflicts are not those which we sustain in the field.

Sir Robert listened to him with affection, admiration, and delight. He was answering the interesting detail, with many grateful apostrophies to that Providence which had crowned his old age with pardon and peace, when a servant opened the door, and announced that Mr. Somerset was in the library.

Thaddeus instantly rose; but Sir Robert put him down again. "Remain here, my dear son," said he, "till I apprise your brother how nearly you are related to him. That door leads into my study; I will call you in when he is prepared?"

The moment Sir Robert joined Pembroke, he read in his pale and harassed countenance how much he required the intelligence which he came to communicate. Mr. Somerset bowed coldly on his father's entrance, and begged to be honoured with his commands.

"They are what I expect will restore you to your usual looks and manner, my dear boy," answered his father, taking his passive hand, and seating him by him; "so attend to me."

Pembroke listened to the beginning of the Baronet's narrative with respectful attention; but when the name of Therese Sobieski was mentioned as the woman whom he had married and deserted; the ready apprehension of his son conceiving the rest, he had only to affirm his eager demand, that Thaddeus was indeed his brother, Pembroke looked wildly around him.

"O, my father!" cried he, "what have you done? Where is he? For what have you sacrificed him?"

"Hear me to an end," rejoined the Baronet, who, then in as few words as possible, repeated the consequent events, with the recent meeting.

Pembroke's transports were now as high as his despair had been deep. He threw himself on his father's breast; he asked for his friend, his brother; and begged to be conducted to him wherever he was. Sir Robert did no more than open the door which divided the library from the dining-room, and in one moment the brothers were firmly locked in each other's arms.

Their father, with a speechless tongue, but an eloquent heart, stood over them with uplifted hands, invoking the spirits of their beatified mothers to behold this heavenly scene.

The feelings of the young men for a long time denied them words, but their eyes, their tears, and their united hands, imparted to each breast a consciousness of mutual love unutterable, if not to be expressed by those looks which are indeed the truest heralds of the soul.

Sir Robert wept like an infant, whilst contemplating these two affectionate brothers; in a faultering voice, he exclaimed, "How soon may these plighted hands be separated by the harpies of the law! Alas, Pembroke you cannot be ignorant that I buy this son at the price of your legitimacy!"

At this speech of his father's, the blood rushed over the ingenuous cheek of Pembroke; but Thaddeus turning instantly to Sir Robert, said, with a smile:—

"On this head, I trust neither my father nor my brother will entertain one thought to trouble them. Had I even the inclination to act otherwise than right, my revered grandfather has put it out of my power to bear any other name than that of Sobieski. He made me swear never to change it; and, as I hope to meet him hereafter," added he, with solemnity, "I will obey him! Therefore, my beloved father, it is only in secret that I can enjoy the conviction that I am your son, and Pembroke's brother: yet, the happiness which I have received with the knowledge that I am so, will ever live here; will ever animate my heart with gratitude to Heaven and you."

"Noble son of the sainted Therese!" cried Sir Robert, "I do not deserve thee!"

"How shall I merit your care of my honour? of my dearest feelings?" exclaimed Pembroke, pressing the hands of his brother to his heart, "I can do nothing, dearest Thaddeus. I am a bankrupt in the means of evincing what is passing in my soul. My mother's chaste spirit thanks you from my lips; yet I will not abuse your generosity; though I retain the name of Somerset, it shall be only the name; the inheritance entailed on my father's eldest son belongs to you."

Whilst Thaddeus embraced his brother with affection, he calmly and firmly replied, that he would rather en-

counter all the probable miseries from which his father's benevolence had saved him, than rob his brother of any part of what he believed to be justly his due.

Sir Robert, with anguished delight, attempted to stopt his generous contention, by saying that it should be terminated by an equal division of his estates.

"Not so, my dear father," replied Thaddeus; "I will never consent that the title of Somerset shall want wealth to support the munificence of its possessor."

After a few more arguments, of the same tendency, the controversy being settled, the remainder of the evening passed in that sweet reciprocity of confidence and peace, which the imagination can best picture

According to the decisions of this night, Sir Robert wrote next morning to his sister, informing her, that accident had introduced Pembroke's friend, the Count Sobieski, to his presence; when, to his amazement and joy, he discovered, that this celebrated young hero, though of a nation to which he had declared an abhorrence, was the only remaining branch of a family, to which he had owed unnumbered obligations. He added, that five-and-twenty years ago, having contracted an immense debt with the Palatine of Masovia, he had, as a small compensation, signed over to the Count (who would now resume all the honours of his rank) the house and estates of Deerhurst, to the amount of three thousand a year. He closed his letter, with many expressions of impatience to present to his sister and niece, their interesting *emigré* under a character which reflected honour on their esteem.

This epistle was put into the hands of Miss Dorothy, by an out-rider, as she was following Miss Beaufort and Lady Albina Stanhope into the travelling coach. Miss Dorothy having seated herself, read it aloud to both the young ladies; at every welcome word, the amazed and overjoyed Mary felt her throbbing heart dropping tears of bliss and gratitude. The good old lady was not backward in demonstrating astonishment. Surprised at her brother's rencountre with Thaddeus, but more at his avowal of obligations to any of that nation about whom he had always asserted directly the reverse: she was so immersed in wonder and pleasure, that her ever cheerful tongue, clothing itself in unaccustomed volubility, entertained the attentive lady Albina all the way to So-

merset, with the public, as well as private history, of the count Sobieski.

When the carriage arrived at Deerhurst, it was past midnight; and, to the no small disappointment of the ladies, the family had been retired to bed above an hour. Miss Dorothy, who would not suffer her brother to be disturbed, having ordered the girls to their rooms, was crossing one of the galleries to her own apartment, when a door opening, Pembroke, in his night-gown and slippers, looked out. He had heard a bustle, and was going to inquire the reason, just as his aunt appeared. She kissed him, bade him good night, told him to prepare for something pleasing in the morning; and, smiling, hurried on to her chamber.

Pembroke had thought so little of Miss Dorothy's lively promise, that he was almost the last who descended to the breakfast-parlour. Miss Dorothy reproached him for his undutiful laziness; but Miss Beaufort, with an anxious consciousness glowing on her cheek, embraced her cousin, who whispered, "Now, I shall see the two dearest friends I possess happy in each other.

Mary's vivid blush had not subsided, when the sudden entrance of Thaddeus, and his agitated bow, overspread her neck and bosom with crimson. A dimness seemed to obscure her faculties: she hardly heard the animated words of Sir Robert, whilst he presented him as the Count Sobieski, the darling son of one who had deserved the highest place in his heart. Whatever he was, she felt that he was lord of hers; and withdrawing her hand hastily from the timid and thrilling touch of him she would have lingered near for ever; she glided back towards an open casement, where the fresh air helped to dispel the faintness which had seized her.

After Miss Dorothy, with all the urbanity of her nature, had declared her welcomes to the Count, she put away the coffee that was handed to her by Pembroke, and said with a smile. "Before I taste my breakfast, I must inform you, Sir Robert, that you have a guest in this house you little expect.' I forbade Mary saying a word, because, as we are told that "the first tellers of *unwelcome news have but a losing office*;" vice versa, I *hoped for a gaining* one; therefore detained such a pleasing piece of intelligence for my own promulgation. Indeed, I doubt, whether or no it will not intoxicate some

folks here," added she, glancing archly on Pembroke, who had looked suddenly round at this whimsical declaration; "suffice it to say, that yesterday morning lady Albina Stanhope, more dead than alive, accompanied by her maid, arrived in a post-chaise at Somerset Castle, and implored our protection as relations. Our dear Mary embraced the poor weeping young creature, who, amidst many tears, recapitulated the horrors she had suffered, since she parted with the Count Sobieski at the Abbey. The latest outrage of her cruel father, was his immediate marriage with the vile Lady Sophia Lovel; and his commands, that lady Albina would treat her as became a daughter. Ill as her ladyship was, when she received these disgraceful orders, she determined to escape them and the degradation they would otherwise cast on the memory of her own mother, by instantly quitting home. To this end she engaged her maid to assist her flight; '*and*,' added she, '*where was I to go? Who would receive the unfortunate victim of the profligate lady Sophia? I could think of none so likely as the father of the generous Mr. Somerset. He told me we were relations; I beseech you to be my friends!*' As I am sensible your benevolent heart, my dear brother," continued Miss Dorothy, "would have dictated the same, I stopped this sweet girl's petition with my caresses, and promised her a kinder father in Sir Robert Somerset."

"You did right, Dorothy," returned the Baronet, "though the Earl and I must ever be strangers, I have no enmity against his children. Where is this amiable lady Albina?"

Miss Dorothy informed him, that in consequence of her recent grief and ill treatment, her ladyship had found herself too unwell to rise with the family; but she would hope to join them at noon.

Pembroke was indeed deeply interested in this intelligence. The simple graces of the lovely Albina had, on the first interview, penetrated his heart. Her sufferings at Harrowby, and the sensibility which her ingenuous nature exhibited without affectation or disguise, had left her image in his soul, long after she disappeared. He now gave the reins to his eager imagination, and was the first in the saloon, to greet his lovely mistress.

Sir Robert Somerset welcomed her with the warm of a parent; but his animated and enraptured son br

out into the most vehement expressions of joy, which she received with timid and grateful bows.

During this scene, Miss Beaufort, no longer able to bear the restraint of company, nor even the accidental glances of Sobieski (whose presence, dear as it was, disconcerted and oppressed her) walked out into the park. Though it was the month of October, the weather continued fine. A bright sun tempered the air, and gilded the yellow leaves which the fresh wind drove before her in a thousand glittering eddies. This was Mary's favourite season. She found its softness diffuse the purest melancholy over her soul. The rugged form of care seems to dissolve under the magic touch of beautiful Nature. Forgetful of the world's anxieties, the tranquillizing spirit of meditation shades the heart of sorrow with a veil, which might well be called the twilight of the mind; and the entranced soul, happy in delusion, half closes its bright eye, reluctant to perceive that such sweet repose rests in error.

Such were the reflections of Mary after her disturbed thoughts had tossed themselves in a sea of doubts, relative to the interest she might probably possess in the heart of Sobieski. Wearied out with suspense, she resolved to resign her future fate to Providence; and, turning her gaze on the lovely objects around, soon found the genius of the season absorb her wholly. Her cheek glowed, her eyes became humid, and casting their mild radiance on the fading flowers beneath, she pursued her way through a cloud of fragrance. It was the last breath of the expiring year. Love is full of imagination. Mary easily glided from the earth's departing charms, to her own waning beauty: the chord once touched, every note reverberated; and hope and fear joy and regret, again dispossessed her late acquired serenity.

It being near three o'clock, lady Albina having expressed a wish to walk out in search of Miss Beaufort, the two brothers offered their attendance. Before her ladyship had passed through the first park, she complained of fatigue; Pembroke alarmed, urged her to enter a shepherd's hut close by, whilst the count Sobieski would proceed alone in quest of his cousin.

Thaddeus, with a beating heart undertook this commission; and bounding over the rustic bridge which crossed the Witham, hastened along the nearest dell.

With the lightness of a young hunter, he mounted the heights, descended to the vallies, traversed one woody nook, and then another, but could see no trace of Miss Beaufort. Almost induced to suppose she had returned to the house, he was slackening his pace to abandon the search, when he caught a glimpse of her figure as she turned the corner of a thicket leading to the terrace above. In an instant he was at her side; with a faultering voice, his hat in his hand, his bosom panting, and cheek glowing with confusion, he repeated his errand.

Mary blushed, trembled, and was alarmed at finding herself alone with Thaddeus. Though he now stood before her in a quality which she had ever believed was his right, yet remembrance of what had passed between them, when in other circumstances, confounded and overwhelmed her. When Constantine was poor and unfriended, it was delicious to pity and to love him. When the same Constantine appeared as a man of rank, invested with a splendid fortune, and extensive fame, she felt lost, annihilated. The cloud which had obscured, not extinguished his glory, was dispensed. He was that Sobieski whom she had admired unseen; he was that Constantine whom she had loved unknown; he was that Sobieski, that Constantine, who, seen and known, she now adored.

Weighed down by the weight of these reflections, she only bowed to what he said; and gathering her cloak from the winds which blew it round her, was hurrying with downward eyes to the stairs of the terrace, when her foot slipping, she must have fallen, had not Thaddeus caught her on his arm. She rose from it with a face blushing like scarlet; and that colour did not recede, when she found that he had not relinquished her hand. Her heart swelled, her head became giddy, her feet trembled; and finding that after a slight motion of her arm, he still held it fast; nearly overcome by inexplicable distress, she turned away her face to conceal its confusion.

Thaddeus saw all this; and, with a fluttering hope, instead of surrendering that hand which he had retained, he made it yet a closer prisoner, by grasping it in both his; and, pressing it earnestly to his breast, said, in a hurried voice, whilst his eloquent eyes poured all their beams upon her averted cheek, "Surely, Miss Beaufort

not deny me the dearest happiness I possess: The
ilege of gratitude to her."
le paused: his soul was too full for utterance; and
ing Mary's hand from his heart to his lips, he kissed
rvently. Almost fainting, Miss Beaufort struggled
withdraw it; and leaning her head, which she was
r able to support, against a tree of the thicket where
r were standing, waved her released hand, in sign
him to leave her.
ich extraordinary agitation palsied all the warm and
iful emotions of the Count. Dreading that he had
nded her, that she might suppose he had presumed
ner kindness; he stood for a moment in silent aston-
nent; then dropping on his knees (hardly conscious of
ng so) caught hold of her cloak; with an energy of
on and voice, which spoke more impetuosity of feel-
than for a long time he had suffered to escape his
t; he implored her pardon, for what had passed.
Forgive me," added he, with encreased earnestness;
rgive me, in justice to your own virtues. I meant
r to thank you for your goodness to an unfortu-
e exile; but if my words or manner have obeyed the
e fervid impulse of my soul, and declared aloud,
it is its glory in secret; blame my nature, most re-
ted Miss Beaufort, not my presumption. I have
dared to look steadily on any aim, higher than your
em."
Mary knew not how to consider this address. The
tion in which he uttered it, his countenance, when
turned to answer him, were both declarative of
ething less equivocal than his speech. He was still
ping the drapery of her cloak; and his eyes, from
ch the wind blew back his fine hair, were beaming
n her, full of that piercing tenderness which at once
olves and seizes the soul.
he passed her hand over her own eyes; with an at-
pt at self-command, she begged him to rise, and in-
stively held out her hand to assist him; he obeyed,
she continued, "You have done nothing, my lord,
ffend me. I was only fearful that my conduct—what
ld done to serve you as a person my aunt esteemed,
t have lessened me—might have led you to imagine,
I would not have acted the same part by any man
h circumstances."

Every emotion which faultered on the tongue of Mary, met an answering pang in the breast of Thaddeus. Fearing that he had set his heart on the possession of a treasure totally out of his reach, he knew not how high had been his hope, till he now felt the depth of his disappointment. He suffered the hand of Miss Beaufort to drop; and taking up his hat, which lay on the grass, with a countenance from which every gleam of joy had vanished, he bowed respectfully; and, in a low tone, replied, "Having the dependent situation in which I appeared at lady Dundas's ever before my eyes, I had not the folly to suppose, that any lady could then notice my misfortunes, influenced by any other consideration than her humanity, that I excited this humanity where alone I was proud to awaken it, was in those hours of dejection my sole comfort; It consoled me for the friends I had lost; it repaid me for the honours, which were no more. But that is past! Seeing no farther cause for compassion, you deem the delusion no longer necessary. Since you will not allow me any individual distinction in having attracted your benevolence, though I am to ascribe all to a charity as diffused as effective; yet I must ever acknowledge, with the deepest gratitude, that I owe my present home and happiness to Miss Beaufort. Farther than this, I shall never presume."

These words, shifted all the Count's anguish to Mary's breast. She perceived the offended delicacy which actuated every syllable as they fell; and, fearful of having incurred their reproof, by her cold and haughty reply, she opened her lips to say something that might better explain what she meant; but her heart failing her, she closed them again, and continued to walk in silence by his side. Having allowed the opportunity to escape, she believed all hopes of exculpation to be at an end; and, not daring to look up, she took a last despairing glance at Sobieski's graceful figure as he walked near her. His arms were folded, his hat pulled over his forehead, and his long dark eye-lashes shading his downward eyes, imparted a dejection to his whole air, which wrapped his weeping heart round and round with regretful pangs. "All!" thought she, "though the offspring of but one *moment*, they will prey on my peace for ever."

At the turning of a little wooded knoll, this silent and pensive pair heard the sound of some one on the

other side, walking fastly through the heaps of dried leaves. In a minute after Sir Robert Somerset approached them.

Whilst his father advanced smiling towards him, Thaddeus attempted to dispel the gloom of his countenance; but not succeeding, he bowed abruptly to the agitated Mary; and hastily said, I will leave Miss Beaufort in your protection, Sir; and go myself to see whether or not lady Albina be recovered from her fatigue."

"I thought to find you all together," returned Sir Robert; "Where is her ladyship?"

I left her with Pembroke in a hut by the river," said Thaddeus, and bowing again, he hurried away, whilst his father called after him to return in a few minutes and accompany him in a walk.

This immediate desertion of Sobieski, when he had come expressly to attend her to lady Albina, nearly overwhelmed Miss Beaufort's before exhausted spirits: hardly knowing whether to remain or to retreat, she was attempting the latter, when her uncle caught her by the arm.

"Stay!" cried he, "why Mary, you surely would not leave me quite alone?"

Mary's tears had gushed over her eyes the moment her back was turned; and as Sir Robert drew her towards him, to his extreme amazement he saw that she was weeping. At a sight so unexpected, the smile of hilarity left his lips. Putting his arm tenderly round her waist (for now that her distress had discovered itself, her agitation became so great that she could hardly stand) he inquired in an affectionate voice, what had afflicted her?

She only answered by her sobs; till finding in impossible to break away from her uncle's arms, she hid her face in his bosom, and gave a loose to the full tide of her tears.

Sir Robert, recollecting the strange haste in which Thaddeus had hurried from them; and remembering Miss Beaufort's generosity to him in town, followed by her succeeding melancholy; at once united these circumstances with her present confusion; and conceiving an instantaneous suspicion of the reality, pressed her with redoubled affection to his bosom.

"I fear, my dearest girl," said he, that something disagreeable has happened between you and the count Sobieski? Perhaps he has offended you? Perhaps he has found my sweet Mary too amiable?"

Miss Beaufort, alarmed at this supposition; after a short struggle, answered, "O no, sir! It is I who have offended him. He thinks that I pride myself on the insignificant services which I rendered to him in London."

This reply convinced the Baronet, that he had not been premature in his judgment; and, with a new born delight springing in his soul, he inquired why she thought so? Had she given him any reason to believe so?

Mary trembled at saying more. Dreading that every word she might utter, would betray how highly she prized the Count's esteem; she faultered, hesitated, stopped. Sir Robert put the question a second time in different terms.

"My loved Mary," said he, seating her by him on the trunk of a tree which had been newly felled, "I am sincerely anxious that you and this young nobleman should regard each other as friends: he is very dear to me: and you cannot doubt, my sweet girl, my affection for yourself. Tell me therefore the cause of this little misunderstanding?"

Miss Beaufort took courage at the kindness of this speech. Drying her glowing eyes though still concealing them with a handkerchief, she replied in a firmer voice; "I believe, sir, that the fault lies totally on my side. The count Sobieski met me on the terrace, and thanked me for what I had done for him. I acted very weakly; I was confused. Indeed, I know not what he said; but he fell upon his knees, and I became so disconcerted, so frightened, of his having attributed my behaviour to indelicacy or forwardness, that I answered something which offended him. And I am sure he now thinks me inhuman and proud."

Sir Robert kissed her throbbing forehead, as she ended this rapid and hardly articulate explanation.

"Tell me candidly, my dearest Mary!" said he, "Can you believe that a man of Sobieski's disposition, would kneel to a woman whom he did not both respect and love? Simple gratitude, my dear girl, is not so

earnest. You have said enough to convince me, whatever be your sentiments, that you are the mistress of his fate: and, if he should mention it to me, may I tell him the scene which has now passed between us? May I tell him, that its just inference, would requite his tenderness with more than your thanks and best wishes?"

Sir Robert ended the sentence in a gay tone; but Mary, whose nice sensibility could not follow her uncle to his sanguine conclusion, looked modestly down, and with a half suppressed sigh, answered; "I will not deny that I esteem the count Sobieski. I admired his character before I saw him: and when I saw him, although ignorant that it was he, my respect encreased. Yet, I never have aspired to any share in his heart, or even his remembrance: I could not have the presumption. Therefore, my dear uncle," added she, laying her trembling hand on his arm, and directing her fluctuating eyes to his face, "I beseech you, as you value my feelings, my peace of mind! never to breathe a syllable of my folly to him. I think," added she, clasping her hands with energy, and forgetting the force of her expression, "I would sooner suffer death than lose his esteem."

"And yet," inquired Sir Robert, "you will at some future period give your hand to another man?"

Mary, who did not consider the extent of this insidious question, answered with fervour, "Never.—I never can be happier than I am," added she, with breathless haste, seeing by the smile on Sir Robert's lips, that far more had been declared by her manner, than the words intended. Fearful of betraying herself farther, she begged permission to retire to the house.

The Baronet, now looking very serious, took her hand; and reseating her by him, said, "No, my dearest Mary; you shall not leave me, unless you honestly avow what are your true sentiments of the count Sobieski. You know, my sweet girl, that I have tried to make you regard me as a father, to induce you to receive from my love, the treble affection of your deceased parents and my lamented wife? If my Mary do not deny this, she cannot treat me with reserve?"

Miss Beaufort was unable to restrain her tears. Sir Robert continued.

"*I will not* overwhelm your delicacy by repeating

the inquiry, whether I have mistaken the source of your recent emotion; only allow me to bestow some encouragement on the Count's attachment, should he claim my services in its behalf?"

Mary put her uncle's hand to her lips, and kissed it, whilst her dropping tears fell on it; and then replied in a timid voice; "I should be a monster of ingratitude, could I hide any thing from you, my dearest Sir, after all this kindness! I confess, that I do esteem the count Sobieski more than any being on earth. Who could see and know him, and feel it possible to regard another?"

"And you shall be his! my darling Mary!" cried the Baronet, mingling his own blissful tears with hers; "I had once hoped to have contrived an attachment between you and Pembroke, but Heaven has decreed it better. When you and Thaddeus are united, I shall be happy; I may then die in peace."

Mary sighed heavily. She could not participate in her uncle's rapture. She thought that she had insulted and disgusted the Count by her late behaviour; and was opening her lips to urge it again, when the object of their conversation appeared at a little distance coming towards them. Full of renewed trepidation, she burst from the Baronet's hand; and taken to flight, left her uncle to meet Sobieski alone.

Sir Robert's anxious question, received a more rapid reply from Thaddeus, than had proceeded from the reluctant Miss Beaufort. The animated gratitude of Sobieski; the ardent, yet respectful manner with which he declared her eminence above all other women, soon convinced the Baronet, that Mary's retreating delicacy had misinformed her. A complete explanation was the consequence; and Thaddeus, who had not been more sanguine in his hopes than his lovely mistress; allowed the clouds over his sunny eyes to disappear.

Sir Robert, impatient to see these two beings, so dear to his heart, repose confidently in each other's affection; the moment he returned to the house, asked his sister for Miss Beaufort. Miss Dorothy having replied, that she had seen her about half an hour ago retire to her own apartments, the Baronet sent a servant up stairs, to beg that she would meet him in the library.

This message found Mary in a paroxysm of distress. She reproached herself for her imprudence, her temerity,

her unwomanly conduct, in having given away her heart to a man who had never seemed to require it. She remembered that her weakness, not her sincerity, had betrayed this humiliating secret to Sir Robert; and, nearly at her wit's end, with a beating heart, she was traversing the room, almost hoping she was in a miserable dream, when her maid entered with the Baronet's commands.

Disdaining herself, and determining to regain some portion of her own respect, by steadily opposing all her uncle's deluding hopes; with an assumed serenity she arrived at the study door. She laid her hand on the lock, but the moment it yielded to her touch, all her firmness vanished; and trembling, and pale as death, she appeared before him.

Sir Robert having supported her to a chair; with the tenderest and most delicate expressions of paternal love, repeated to her the sum of his conversation with the Count. Mary was almost wild at this discourse. She dreaded that the first proposal of their union had come from her uncle; and, burying her agitated face in her hands, exclaimed, "O sir! I fear that you have for ever made me despicable in my own eyes; that you have told the count Sobieski how weak I have been?"

Sir Robert tried to assure her that she alarmed herself without a cause; but she would not, she could not be pacified; she believed that her tenderness and delicacy had been made a rash sacrifice; and was sitting gloomily weeping on a window-seat, when the Baronet gently added, "Well Mary, since I cannot prevail over this strange incredulity, I will call in a more powerful pleader."

He rose and opened the door which led to the dining-room. Miss Beaufort instantly got up, and flying to the opposite door, would have retreated, had not Sir Robert suddenly thrown himself in her way. He threw his arm about her waist, and turning her round, she saw the Count, who had entered, standing and regarding her with an anxiety which covered her before pale features, with blushes.

His father bid him come near. Sobieski immediately obeyed, though with a step that expressed how reluctant he was, to oppress the woman whom he so deeply loved. Mary's face was now hidden in her uncle's bosom. Sir

Robert put her almost lifeless hand into that of his son; who, dropping on his knee, said in an agitated voice, "Dearest Miss Beaufort, do you really recall those cruel words which you directed to me this morning? May I indulge myself in the idea, that I am blessed with your esteem?"

Mary could not reply, but whispered to her uncle, "Pray, Sir, desire the Count to rise! I am already sufficiently overwhelmed."

"My sweet Mary!" returned the Baronet pressing her in his arms; "this is no time for deception on either side. I know both your hearts. Rise Thaddeus," said he to the Count, whilst he locked both their hands closely within his; "take him, Mary: receive from your uncle his most precious gift; my matchless and injured son."

The shock which the first part of this speech occasioned Miss Beaufort, would have sunk her exhausted spirits to insensibility, had not the extraordinary assertion at its end, aroused and surprised her.

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed she, "What do you mean, my dear uncle?"

"Thaddeus will explain all to you," returned he, "May Heaven bless you both! I leave you together; and from him you will be confirmed in the truth of what I say."

Mary was too much astonished to think of following her uncle out of the room. She sunk on a seat, and turning her eyes full of amazement towards the Count, seemed to demand an explanation. Thaddeus, who still retained her passive hand, pressed it warmly to his heart; and whilst his effulgent eyes were beaming rapture and love, he imparted to her a concise but impressive narrative of his relationship with Sir Robert, and their late arrangement. He touched with short, yet ardent enthusiasm, on the virtues of his mother; he acknowledged the unbounded gratitude which belonged to that God who had so wonderfully conducted him to find a parent and a home in England; and with renewed pathos of look and manner, ratified the proffer which Sir Robert had made of his heart and hand.

Mary had listened with uncontroulable emotion to this interesting detail. Her eyes overflowed: their ingenuous language, enforced by the eloquent blood which

glowed on her cheek, did not require the medium of words to declare what she felt. Thaddeus gazed on her with a certainty of bliss, which penetrated his soul till its feelings almost amounted to pain. The heart may ache with joy: neither sighs nor language, could express what passed in the Count's; he held her hand to his lips; his other arm fell unconsciously round her waist; and in a moment he found that he had pressed her to his breast. His heart beat violently. Miss Beaufort rose instantaneously from her chair; but her pure nature needed no disguise; she looked up to him, whilst her blushing eyes were raining down tears of delight; and pronounced in a trembling voice, "Tell my dear uncle, that Mary Beaufort glories in the means by which she becomes his daughter."

She moved to the door: Thaddeus, whose full tide of transport denied him utterance, only clasped her hands again to his lips and bosom; then relinquishing them with reluctance, he suffered her to quit the room.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

The magnificent establishment which this projected union offered to Sobieski, seemed to heal the yet bleeding conscience of Sir Robert Somerset. Although he had acquiesced in the Count's generous surrender of the family honours, his heart remained ill at ease. Every dutiful expression from this long neglected son, stabbed him with an availing remorse. Conscious that his criminal marriage with Pembroke's mother, had deprived the son of Therese of his just inheritance, he could never meet Sobieski's filial attentions without experiencing pangs of self-reproach which embittered all his joy. Miss Beaufort's avowed and returned affection, at once removed the sting of this incessant recollection: Mistress of immence wealth, her hand would put the injured Thaddeus in possession, not only of those pure delights dependent alone on mutual sympathy of soul, but again empower his munificent spirit to exert itself in the disposal of an almost princely fortune.

Such meditations having followed the now tranquillised Baronet to his pillow, they brought him into the breakfast-parlour next day full of that calm pleasure which promises a steady continuation. The happy family were assembled. Miss Dorothy saluted her brother, whose brightened eye declared that he had something pleasant to communicate; and he did not keep her a moment in suspense. With the first dish of coffee which was poured out, his grateful heart unburthened itself of its delightful tidings, that before the present month should expire, Miss Beaufort would give her hand to the count Sobieski.

Pembroke was the only hearer who did not express surprise at this declaration: The transported Thaddeus had flown to his bed-side the preceding night, and with a bounding and enraptured heart, had related the whole of the recent scenes.

During Sir Robert's animated speech, Mary's blushing yet triumphant eyes, sought a veil in a branch of geranium which she held in her trembling hand and affected to smell.

Miss Dorothy immediately rose from her chair; her heightened colour and glittering eyes spoke more than her lips, when she pressed, first her niece, and then the count Sobieski, in her venerable arms.

"Heaven bless you both!" cried she, "This marriage will be the glory of my age."

Mary turned from the embrace of her aunt, to meet the warm congratulations of Pembroke. Whilst he kissed her burning cheek, he whispered loud enough for every one else to her; "And why may I not participate in my good aunt's triumph? Attempt it, dear Mary! If you can persuade my father to allow me to make myself as happy with lady Albina Stanhope, as you will render Sobieski, I shall for ever bless you!"

Lady Albina coloured like scarlet. Sir Robert took her hand with a smile of pleased surprise. "Do you, my lovely guest? Do you sanction, what this bold boy has just said?"

Lady Albina made no answer; but blushing deeper than before, cast a side-long glance at Pembroke, as if to petition his support. He was at her side in an instant; then seriously and earnestly entreating his father's consent to an union with her ladyship; (whose approbation

of his passion he had obtained the preceding day in the shepherd's, but; he awaited with hoping anxiety, the sounds which seemed faultering on Sir Robert's lips.

The Baronet, quite overcome by his darling Pembroke having, like his brother, disposed of his heart so much to his own honour, found himself unable to say what he wished; and joining the hands of the two young people in silence, he hurried out of the room. He ascended immediately to the library, where, kneeling down he returned devout thanks to that all-gracious Being, who had crowned one so unworthy, which blessings so conspicuous.

Thaddeus, no less than his father, remembered the hand, which having guided him through a thorny but short path of sorrow, had in the end conducted him to an Eden of bliss: His heart did not forget, even in the midst of gaiety and smiles, the ardent gratitude which was due to the beneficent dispenser of his happiness.

Before the lapse of a week, it was discovered, that Sir Robert must hasten the marriage of Pembroke with lady Albina, or be forced by law, to yield her to the demands of her father. After some search, lord Tinemouth had learned that his daughter was under the protection of Sir Robert Somerset. Inflamed with rage and revenge, he sent to order her immediate return, under pain of an instantaneous appeal to the courts of judicature

Too well aware that her non-age made her completely obnoxious to this threat, lady Albina fell into the most alarming fits on the first communication of the message. Sir Robert urged, that in her circumstances, no authority could be opposed to the Earl's, except that of a husband; and on this consideration, she complied with his arguments and the prayers of her lover, directly to give that power into the hands of Pembroke.

Accordingly next morning by day-break, accompanied by Miss Dorothy and the enraptured Mr. Somerset, the terrified lady Albina commenced her journey to Scotland; that being the only place where, in her situation, the marriage could be legally solemnized.

While these young runaways, chaperoned by an old maiden aunt, were pursuing their rapid flight to Gretna Green, Sir Robert sent his steward to London to prepare two houses near his own in Grosvenor-square, for the reception of his children. During these necessary

arrangements, a happy fortnight elapsed at Deerhurst. Thrice happy to Mary, because its tranquil hours imparted to her captive heart "*a sober certainty of that waking bliss,*" which had so often animated the visions of her imagination. Morning noon and evening, the companion of the count Sobieski, she saw with added enthusiasm, that the sublime and princely virtues did not reign alone in his bosom. Their insufferable brightness was rendered less intense, was beautifully veiled, by the softening shades of those gentle amiabilities, which are the soothers and sweeteners of life. His breast seemed the residence of love: of a love, that not only infused a warmer existence through her soul, but diffused such a light of benevolence over every being within its influence, that all appeared happy who caught a beam of his eye; all enchanted, who shared the magic of his smile. Under what different effects had she seen this man! Yet how consistent! At the first period of their acquaintance, she beheld him like that glorious orb which her ardent fancy told her he resembled, struggling with the storm, or looking with steady grandeur through the clouds which obscured his path: But now, like the radiant sun of summer, amidst a splendid sky, he seemed to stand, the source of a light, and love, and joy.

Thus did the warm fancy, and warmer heart of Mary Beaufort, paint the image of her lover; and when Sir Robert received intelligence that the Gretna Green party had got to town, and were impatient for the arrival of the dear inhabitants of Deerhurst, she felt some embers of human frailty sparkle in her bosom, at the anticipation of witnessing the homage which those who had despised the unfriended Constantine, would pay to the declared and illustrious Sobieski.

The news of lady Albina's marriage, enraged the earl of Tinemouth almost to madness. Well aware, that his withholding her ladyship's fortune, would occasion no uneasiness to a family of Sir Robert Somerset's vast possessions, he gave way to still more vehement bursts of passion; and in a fit of impotent threatening, embarked, with all his household, to spend the remainder of the season on his estates in Ireland.

This abrupt departure of the Earl caused lady Albi*na little* uneasiness. His unremitted cruelty, her bro*ther's indifference*, and the barbed insults of lady So-

phia Lovel, had rankled too deep, to leave any filial regret behind. Considering their absence as a suspension of pain, rather than as a punishment, she did not stain the kiss which she imprinted on the venerable cheek of her new parent, with one tear to the memory of her unnatural father.

Whilst all was preparation, splendour, and happiness, in Grosvenor-square, Thaddeus did not forget the excellent Mrs. Robson. He had seen her twice, and had left with her the first payment of an annuity that would render herself and her grand-daughter independent for life. Neither did he neglect Mr. Burnett. It was not in his nature to allow any who had served him to pass unrequited. He visited him one day in his rounds; and having repaid him, with a generosity that astonished even the good money-lender; he took his sword, with the other relics of what were once so dear, and pressing them mournfully, yet gratefully, to his breast, re-entered Sir Robert's carriage; and was set down at his brother's house, about an hour before dinner.

Lady Albina Somerset's arrival in London, had been greeted by the immediate calls of all the people in town, who either had been acquainted with the late countess of Tinemouth, or were known to the Baronet's family. Amongst the earliest names whose tickets appeared at her ladyship's door, were those of lord Berrington, Dr. Blackmore, Captain and Mrs. Montresor, and Dr. Cavendish. Lady Albina did not propose opening her gates to the gay world, till Miss Beaufort and the Count were married, and they and she had been presented at Court; but having heard Pembroke speak of the before-mentioned persons with particular respect, (when she took the list of her numerous visitors out of her footman's hand) she selected them as the first party which should grace her table.

Thaddeus had flown to his kind friend Cavendish, the very day on which he came to town; and telling him, with a smiling countenance, that he was that Sobieski, about whose strange fate he had so often expressed an interest; the astonished, and delighted doctor embraced him with an ardour, which spoke better than language, his admiration and esteem.

When the Count alighted at Mr. Somerset's door on

the day of his call on the money-lender, he was agreeably surprised by finding the invited group in the saloon. Lord Berrington, and the ever lively Maria Egerton, now Mrs. Montresor, ran up to him at the same instant, and expressed their sincere joy at not only seeing him again, but in a situation so consonant to his fame and quality.

Thaddeus replied to their felicitations with a frankness, and grace peculiarly his own; and was not a little surprised when Dr. Blackmore, a moment afterwards, recognized him to be the stranger who had so much engaged his attention about a year ago. The Count had no recollection of this circumstance, till the good doctor brought the very hour to his remembrance, by mentioning the Hummums, and recapitulating the rudeness of the man in black, whose name he since had learned was Loftus.

Pembroke could hardly hear the worthy clergyman to an end. He exclaimed against his vile tutor's indefatigable villainy; and, turning to Sir Robert, exclaimed, "My dear Sir, the recent hurrying events have hitherto averted justice from seizing this man; but I must beg, that his connexion with any thing belonging to us may end to-morrow. Write to him, and order him to resign his situation at Arun-house immediately."

The Baronet promised; and Sobieski trying to change a conversation which agitated his brother, addressed Mrs. Montresor on some general topics. Captain Montresor joined them, and expressed great regret at the loss he should shortly sustain in the absence of his friend captain Roos.

"How? Where is he going?" demanded his wife.

Montresor replied, by lamenting the ill state of lady Sara Roos's health, and the necessity which her husband found to carry her to Italy for its restoration.

"I met him this morning," continued he, "quite in despair about her."

Thaddeus too well divined, that this encreased indisposition owed its rise to his return to town; and inwardly petitioning Heaven that absence might complete her cure, he could not suppress the sigh which her fatal devotedness to him wrung from his pity and his gratitude.

No one present, except the affectionate Mary, marked the transient melancholy which passed over his coun-

tenance. She, who had suspected the unhappy lady Sara Roos's attachment, loved Thaddeus, if possible, still dearer, for the compassion he bestowed on the victim of a passion, which is as inscrutable as destructive.

When the party descended to dinner, Miss Dorothy, who sat next to Thaddeus, rallied him upon the loss which he had sustained of one of his most potent admirers. This strange attack, following so instantly the information relating to lady Sara Roos, summoned a fervid colour into the face of the Count: he looked surprised, and rather confused, at the good old lady; who smiling, related, that she had been told by her milliner this morning, that Miss Euphemia Dundas had married a Scotch nobleman near Hamilton.

"So much the better for my dear Mary!" cried Pembroke: "Her jealous fears are now at an end: and little Phemy was no contemptible rival. Besides, Albina," said he, turning gayly to her ladyship, "you may congratulate yourself on the same score. I hear that an old friend of mine is going to take her loving sister off *my* hands. Come, Dr. Cavendish, you must validate my report, for I learnt it of you."

The good doctor smiled, and answered in the affirmative; adding, that his friend at Stamford had written to him as news, that "the eldest son of Sir Halerand Shafto, was on the point of marriage with Miss Dundas, a rich East Indian heiress, who was visiting my lady."

Sobieski wished them both happy. Lord Berrington protested, that his lordship was more generous than just.

"I vow to heaven," cried the young viscount "I never knew people the end of whose lives seemed so bent on mischief. Euphemia, pretty as she is, was better known by her spirit of tormenting, than by her beauty: and as for the poor squire whom Diana has conjured into matrimony, I have little doubt of his future honours."

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Montresor, "Poor Acteon! I warrant she will allot him the punishment he merits, for stepping between her and that delectable Endymion, Fool Lascelles!"

"A truce, my dear Madam?" entreated Miss Beaufort.

"She does not deserve it of you," returned the laughing lady, pursuing the subject, till Miss Dorothy and

Sir Robert Somerset were both obliged to call very loudly upon charity.

Thaddeus, who knew not the nature of those sensations which constitute a rejoicing over the probable misconduct of his enemies, considered this part of the conversation, as by far the least pleasant of the day.

Pembroke's wish, with regard to Mr. Loftus, was complied with next morning. Dr. Blackmore having been prevailed upon to take charge of the young lord Arun, reluctantly bore the mandate for his predecessor's dismission, and set out the same day for the seat of his lordship's aunt.

Whilst Sir Robert Somerset denounced the guilty, he was careful neither to plunge him into fresh temptations, nor to suffer his crimes to injure the innocent. In pity to age and helplessness, he settled two hundred pounds per annum, on the wretched man's mother and sisters in Wales. And shortly after in consequence of Loftus confessing that all Pembroke's allegations were but too just, Sir Robert adjudged one hundred yearly, to the culprit himself, that at least he might not be induced to obtain, by deeper villainy, a subsistence. As for the living of Somerset, which had been the price of Mr. Loftus's integrity, that, Sir Robert determined to bestow on Dr. Blackmore, whenever it should fall.

The appointed day being arrived, in which Mary was to give herself and her earthly happiness, into the power of the only man, whom having once beheld, she ever could have resigned them to; she pronounced her vows at the altar, with unsteadiness of tongue, but a fixed heart: and when she alighted at Mr. Somerset's cottage in Epping Forest, she received the congratulations of her dear friends, with a tenderness, an elevation of soul, which drowned her glowing and enraptured face in tears.

The Count Sobieski was not less sensible of the favoured path which Providence had spread before him. He had passed through hosts of evils, and he now looked forward to a long Sabbath of peace and gratitude. He found it at the cottage. He enjoyed its full possession, when returned to town he saw his beautiful wife at the head of fashion, not only adorning his house, but filling his home with all the ineffable comforts of domestic life, and domestic virtues.

One fine evening in which they were out together,

she ordered the carriage to stop in Covent Garden; when it drew up, she expressed a wish to walk through the church-yard. Thaddeus immediately complied; and before he had time to express his surprise at the strangeness of her request, she led him towards the grave of his revered friend Butzou, who had been buried there. It was no longer the same; a white marble tablet occupied the place of grass and yarrow. The Count bent forward, and read with swimming eyes, the following inscription:

Stop, traveller, thou treadest upon a hero!

Here

rests the body

of

Lieutenant General Butzou.

Sobieski's soul was pierced. Incapable of speaking, he led his wife back to her carriage; and, placing her in it, clasped her suddenly and fondly to his breast. His tears gushed out in spite of himself, and mingling with hers, poured those thanks, those assurances of animated approbation through her heart, as made it even ache with excess of happiness.

Thus mutually endeared, we leave the family of Sir Robert Somerset. We leave Thaddeus Sobieski, Blessed in the fruition of every earthly good. Whilst he, each morning, opens his eye to fresh prospects of joy, his pure and manly heart, derives its best felicity from gratitude to Heaven; and owns, that the retrospection of past misfortunes, like shade to a picture, gives to our present bliss greater force and brightness.

THE END.

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